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GRIFFIN
Gisippus

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FRENCH'S STANDARD DRAMA

GISIPPUS:

OR,

THE FORGOTTEN FRIEND.

A Play

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY GERALD GRIFFIN, ESQ.

*WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS,
COSTUMES, RELATIVE POSITIONS, ETC.*

NEW-YORK:

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THE
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DICTIONARY

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

GERALD GRIFFIN, the author of "Gisippus," is better known by his popular tales, illustrative of Irish character and manners. "The Collegians," and the series of "Tales of the Munster Festivals," acquired a wide-spread popularity in their day ; and the author was placed, by general consent, as an Irish novelist, by the side of Banim and Carleton.

Griffin was born at Limerick on the 12th December, 1803. His first school-master was one of those original Milesian pedants, that novelists and humorists have taken as models for characters ; one of the advertisements of this pedagogue commenced thus :—"When ponderous polysyllables promulgate professional powers—." The future novelist and dramatist was not allowed to benefit himself long under the tuition of this "learned pundit ;" he was placed under a private tutor, and finished his education at a school in Limerick. At a very early age his love of letters was developed, for while a mere youth he became connected with the Limerick Advertiser newspaper, and before he had completed his twentieth year, he had written four tragedies, the last of which was "Gisippus." Urged by the commendations of his friends, and with the hope of distinguishing himself in literature and the drama, he migrated to London, but unknown, and apparently unfriended he could not obtain a hearing for his tragedy. Disappointed in this hope, he betook himself to reporting for the daily press and contributing to the magazines. In 1825, he succeeded in getting an operatic melo-drama brought out at the English Opera House, and in 1827 appeared his "Holland Tide, or, Munster Popular Tales," a work of great promise. This was followed by "Tales of the Munster Festivals," which obtained great celebrity. "The Collegians" was published in 1829, and in 1830 he was again in the field with two tales—"The Rivals," and "Tracey's Ambition."

In 1832, he published his last work, "Tales of the Five Senses." He still continued his miscellaneous labors for the press, although, notwithstanding his success and popularity, he became tired of the world, and determined to seclude himself in one of those retreats set apart in Ireland for the devotees of the Catholic church. In 1838 he carried his design into execution, and joined the society of the "Christian Brotherhood," in the monastery at Cork. In the second year of his noviciate he was attacked with typhus fever, and died on the 12th June, 1840.

The tragedy of "Gisippus" was found among his papers at his death, and we cannot better end our brief compilation of his life, than by transcribing the preface prefixed to the London edition to this play, after its successful production by Mr. Macready at Drury Lane theatre.

"The following play has been brought before the public under rather peculiar circumstances. The author of "The Collegians," to whom it owed its origin, had in the early part of his literary career a strong turn for dramatic writing, and so long ago as the year 1823, had produced no less than four tragedies. The first of these was begun while he was yet in his eighteenth year, and Gisippus, the last of them, before he had completed his twentieth. He went to London in the summer of that year filled with high aspirings after literary fame, which are characteristic of that passion in early youth, and which were strengthened, in his case, by a temperament peculiarly ardent and sanguine, and by his want of experience of the difficulties with which its attainment is usually beset. His intention was to get one of them performed at one of the great theatres, if possible; but at that time, the public taste was vitiated by managers who yielded to the depraved appetites of the multitude, instead of endeavoring to correct them. Mechanical wonders, cataracts of real water, brilliant scenic representations, and sights of an amphitheatrical and popular character, usurped the place of the legitimate drama, and after many distressing difficulties, and much valuable time sacrificed in the attempt, he gave it up as hopeless. Gisippus is the only one of those plays that has been preserved among his papers; the rest there is no trace of, and it is presumed they have been destroyed. It may, perhaps, be interesting to notice what the author himself says of it in a letter to his friends in Ireland, a short time before this determination was come to. "But what gives me the greatest satisfaction respecting it, is the consciousness that I have written an *original play*. That passion of revenge, you know was threadbare," (he alludes to the subject of one of his former pieces.) "Banim has made some suggestions which I have adopted; I will finish it immediately, place it in his hands, and abide the result in following other pursuits." Some time after the author's death, his friends having become acquainted with Mr. Charles Kean, when he was in the south of Ireland, were induced to submit it to his

judgment. In a letter received from him soon after, he says, "I have read *Gisippus* with the greatest attention, and though fully impressed with the beauty of the language and the high talent displayed throughout, yet I should fear its success as an acting play, and, indeed, should be sorry to produce it on the stage." They have been given to understand that subsequently it was submitted to the manager of one of the most respectable of the lesser theatres, who seems to have been much less touched by the beauties of the piece than Mr. Kean; for when taxed subsequently by one who more fully appreciated its merits, with the want of judgment shown in letting such a play "slip through his fingers," he stated that "he had only read it on the outside of an omnibus." These circumstances, however, are only mentioned for the purpose of showing that the legitimate drama has had difficulties to contend with, that could not readily be anticipated, and that the merits of a piece, have not hitherto been sufficient to prevent its rejection. As the author's friends, notwithstanding these repeated discouragements, felt very confident of the excellence of the play, and as the latter part of Mr. Kean's expressed opinion seemed so decided and strong, they could hardly bring themselves to believe he had given the subject all the consideration it deserved. They therefore determined to make one attempt more, and placed it in the hands of Mr. Macready, who, after having perused it, pronounced a decided opinion in its favor. They cannot help expressing a high degree of satisfaction, at having their previous feelings on the subject thus strengthened by the decision of a person of Mr. Macready's good taste and judgment, and they look forward with confidence to the public for a confirmation of his opinion, and for the encouragement of that desire which he has manifested to give the English drama the position its merits entitle it to."

To the reader familiar with Griffin's prose writings, we need scarcely to say, that he possessed the power of depicting strong emotion and stormy passions with consummate skill. In "*Gisippus*" this faculty has enabled him to clothe a somewhat original story with deep interest, as it is developed through the action of the piece, by characters striking in their contrast, and language at once energetic and harmonious.

The American Stage is indebted to Mr. Anderson, for the introduction of "*Gisippus*" on our boards, where his able personation of the hero, has obtained for the play a deserved popularity. Mr. Charles Pitt has also acquired a wide-spread reputation, for his beautiful embodiment of *Gisippus*. Mr. Pitt is so truly an *intellectual* actor, and combines with this great qualification the equally important one of being *natural* in his delineations, that we have no doubt but that the part in his hands would be one of great beauty and truthfulness.

CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	<i>Drury Lane, 1842.</i>	<i>Park, 1847.</i>	<i>Broadway, 1848.</i>
<i>Gisippus</i>	Mr. Macready.	Mr. Anderson.	Mr. Anderson.
<i>Titus Quin. Fulvius</i> ..	" Anderson.	" Dyott.	" Vandenhoff.
<i>Medon</i>	" Graham.	" Stark.	" Fredericks.
<i>Pheax</i>	" Elton.	" S. Pearson.	" McDouall.
<i>Chremes</i>	" Hudson.	" A. Andrews.	" Dawson.
<i>Lycius</i>	" G. Bennett.	" Barry.	" Kingsley.
<i>Norban</i>	Miss E. Phillips.	Miss Denny.	Mrs. Sergeant.
<i>Davus</i>	Mr. W. Bennett.	Mr. Nelson.	Mr. D. C. Anderson.
<i>Decius</i>	" Lynne.	" Anderson.	" Gallot.
<i>Mutius</i>	" Waldron	" McDouall.	" G. Chapman.
<i>Macro</i>	" Selby.	" Bernard.	" Brydges.
<i>Roman Centurion</i> ..	" Bender.	" Heath.	" Wright.
<i>Sicilian Merchant</i> ..	" Harcourt.	" Gallot.	" Jones.
<i>Sophonra</i>	Miss H. Faucit.	Mrs. G. Jones.	Miss Wallack.
<i>Hero</i>	" Turpin.	Miss Flynn.	" Gordon.

COSTUMES.

GISIPPUS.—*First dress* : Blue shirt, and red Grecian toga, richly embroidered with gold, wreath of pink roses round the head, flesh leggins, and sandals. *Second dress* : Long white shirt, and blue toga, trimmed with gold, white ribbon round the head. *Third dress* : Old brown shirt, slate-colored toga, old sandals, fleshings, and sword.

TITUS QUINTUS FULVIUS.—*First dress* : Grecian toga. *Second dress* : Roman toga.

MEDON.—Rich Grecian shirt and mantle.

PHEAX.—Ditto.

CHREMES.—Ditto.

LYCIAS.—Plain white shirt, trowsers, and robe.

DECIUS.—Roman shirt, breastplate, and helmet.

MACRO.—Ditto.

CENTURION.—Ditto.

DAVUS.—Good Grecian Dress.

MUTIUS.—Plain Grecian dress.

SICILIAN MERCHANT.—Ditto.

SOPHRONIA.—White muslin Grecian dress, trimmed with silver, and ribbon round the head.

HERO.—Plain Grecian dress.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right* ; L. *Left* ; R. D. *Right Door* ; L. D. *Left Door* ; S. E. *Second Entrance* ; U. E. *Upper Entrance* ; M. D. *Middle Door* ; F. *the Flat* ; D. F. *Door in Flat*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means *Right* ; L., *Left* ; C., *Centre* ; R. C., *Right of Centre* ; L. C., *Left of Centre*.

Passages marked with Inverted Commas, are usually omitted in the Representation.

GISIPPUS.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Athens.*

Enter CHREMES, PHEAX, and MEDON, *L.*

Med (c.) The sweetest, fairest, loveliest maid in Athens,
Although I be her brother, that do say it.

Chre. (L.) Sum all perfection in one little word,
And say—the wealthiest maid in Athens.

Med. Nay.
Gisippus does not care for that! He loves
Too deeply, and too fervently, for that.
And yet, I think not the *less* truly for it!
The shafts of the boy-God ne'er would less surely
For being tipped with gold!

Pheax. (R.) But prithee, Meden,
When goes the wedding forward?

Med. Why, he hath waited
The changing of her humor these three years,
In patient fondness; and it seems not like,
Now he hath bent at last her stubborn will
Unto the fashion of his own, and weaned
Her memory from that phanptom-love that haunted it,
He'll stay the consummation of his joy
O'erlong.—But look you yonder. [*Pointing L.*]

Pheax. 'Tis Fulvius!

Chre. Returned so soon from Corinth?

Med. How!—what, Fulvius?

Chre. You should have heard Gisippus speak of him.
He is the other self—his Pylades—
The young Roman student!

Med. As I know him not,

And have some matters that command me hence,
 I'll leave you to accost him. Fare you well. [*Exit Med*
and Phe. R.

Enter FULVIUS, L.

Chre. So early from your studies, Fulvius?

Fulv. A smile! I've searched half Athens for a smile,
 And never found it. What a heavy time
 I spend here with you Greeks! I soon shall quit
 Your Academic groves, and I am glad on't.

Chre. Of all men, you should not complain of dullness
 Yourself a very cynic, you have not
 The capability of pleasantry;
 Our maids of Athens find you cold and harsh.
 And given to thinking.

Fulv. I'll be so no longer!—
 (*Musing.*) 'Tis true, I had a cause

Chre. (*Crossing R.*) And do ye still
 Dream of this fair Corinthian vision! Oh!
 How passing a sigh was there!

Fulv. (*R.*) Peace! Peace!

Chre. To pine for years upon a boyish fancy,
 And let the thousand bright and real beauties
 That court your praise, flit by you all unheeded
 Shame! shame! You ne'er again will meet your old love,
 (And tho' you should, you've found her most unworthy;)
 Then cast that memory to the winds! Look round ye!
 There are bright eyes and fairer forms in Greece,
 And hearts less false, believe me. I have seen ye,
 Before this fair Corinthian fancy seized you,
 Flatter a graceful robe with such a spirit,
 And make such furious protestations? Oh!
 But now, your manhood is forgotten.

Fulv. No!
 Give me your hand—you have well counselled me,
 And thou shalt see me changed to what I was,
 From this time forth. "No! my lost love shall find
 "I can be free and generous as she was."—
 The first fair form I meet, I bend the knee to;
 I'll be no pining fool, to die forsaken,
 And have my name and fortune chronicled
 Among the tales of true love-victims. Hark thee!
 I'll think of her no more.

Chre. Bravely resolved !

Fulv. I say, I'll thiuk of her no more !

Chre. And wisely,
And gallantly 'tis said.

Fulv. No—by the Gods,
I never will !

Chre. Well, you have said enough on't.—
Here comes Gisippus, with his wedding face on.

Fulv. Gisippus !

Chre. There's a smile !—you longed to see one—
The smile successful lore wears. Are ye bid
Unto the bridal ?

Fulv. Aye ; but know not yet
The lady of the feast nor sought to learn
Ere this.—What ! Gisippus !

Enter GISIPPUS and a Slave, R.

Gis. You are well met
I'm glad to see you wear so gay a brow
To honor our espousal.—(*To slave.*) To your mistress :
Bid her expect me earlier than she looked for. [*Exit*
I've sought you, Fulvius. *Slave, R.*

Fulv. I shall now, at length,
Behold this paragon your bride, and know her ?
Do you find her still a paragon ?

Gis. And think you,
Love can be led by circumstance so easily ?

Chre. Ay. Passion hath its change of seasons, sir ;
And 'twere as vain to hope eternal Summer,
As an eternal faith. This is with you
The Spring of courtship, which calls up the flowers,
The fairest flowers of love—your blooming fancies—
Your fragrant love-thoughts, murmuring sighs and pray'rs.
But even as Nature's spring, Love's too must roll
Away ; and then comes your adored honey-moon,
Love's summer of enjoyment ; next, his Autumn
Of lukewarm liking, verging to indifference,
The time of shrugs and yawns, and absent thoughts.
And then his Winter comes—frosty and dry,
Sharp, biting, bitter ; cunning in cold taunts ;
Making the evening hearth, so late a paradise,
A place of harsh uncomfort.—Then, O Love !

How suddenly thy changeful votaries
Find thy Elysium void ! From the pale poet,
Who wooed the groves in song-lorn melancholy,
To him the blustering terror of the field,
Who sighed like Boreas, and who made love like war—
All, weary grown of the ignoble bondage,
Look back with scorn upon the yoke they've spurned,
And wonder how the silly toy had power
To make them sin so palpably 'gainst wisdom.

Gis. Peace, scoffer.

Chre. True—that speech was for a married man
Not for a mateless turtle like myself.

I'll leave you with a proselyte I've made
Within this hour—no very worthless votary—

You will confirm the change I have begun. [Exit, R

Gis. Come to my bridal, Fulvius. You shall see
Some beauties worth the wooing, though they lack
The eagle spirit of your Roman maids.

Fulv. And I shall deem them lovely in that want.

Those eagle spirits are too grand for me :
Such forms may grace a painter's canvas well,
Grouped in a legend of the Commonwealth,
But by an evening fire are cold companions.
Woman was made for love, and not for wonder.
Give me the pliant, soft, and human fair—
But Heaven defend me from your soaring beauties !
Your love is none of these ?

Gis. (R.) Come with me, sir :
Let your own judgment answer you.

Fulv. (L.) And tell me—
You are indeed the happy one you seem ?

Gis. Happy ! Ah, thou cold Western, thou dull scholar,
Made up of all crabbed systems, I'll not talk
With thee of that thou can'st not comprehend.
And yet, if thou hadst seen her, Fulvius,
Although thy breast were frigid as the stream
That curdles through the usurper's withered veins,
Thou still wouldst own my happiness.—But yet—

Fulv. Nay, if your fortune may admit that clause,
I shall not envy you.

Gis. One thing troubles me—

Fulv. Ay, I should wonder else Did you then look

To rest your happiness on a woman's will,
And find it unalloyed? What is this seasoner
Of yours?

Gis. Why, nothing. It hath taken birth
In thought alone—a doubt of love, too sensitive
To give e'en rapture's self free entertainment.
Some old affection combated my love,
That still is made a mystery. Faith stands
On unsure grounds where confidence is wanting,
And hers I lack. But let doubt find out me
I'll not seek it, nor do. She's mine; and I
Could trace no lingering of the hesitation
That chilled my earlier wooing, in the deed
That made her mine at length. But fare ye well: [*Cros-*
I'll meet you straight and bring you to her house: *ses L.*

Fulv. There's something more than beauty to content
ye?

Gis. There are, as you will see, some fair possessions;
Yet, Fulvius, by the honor of my love,
I had no thought of these when I became
Her suitor.

Fulv. I believe you.

Gis. And it was not
My fortunes placed my need beyond them, neither.
Had not this chanced, I were a ruin every way:
Two thousand sesterces were all I owned,
And those I was a debtor for—I staked
My villa to command them. Do you wonder
That I should thus send my last ventures forth,
On the frail prospect of a woman's kindness?

Fulv. I rather wonder that hath not deceived you.
But frankly, I am glad to see ye happy,
And like yourself again.

Gis. Oh, I have but now
Begun to live! Until this morn, my soul
Ran its career in darkness; and the world—
Fair unto those who live in Fortune's smiles—
Was unto me a weariness; but this
Hath poured a flood of light into my soul,
That no succeeding night can chill or darken.

[*Exeunt severally, Gisippus, L., Fulvius, R.*

SCENE II.—*The Gardens of Sophronia, with Grottoes, &c.*
Music.

Enter SOPHRONIA and HERO, L.

Hero. (L. c.) Sophronia ! Not a word ! Is it to hide
 A blush or tear, that veil's so closely drawn ?
 Dear friend, speak to me ! on my heart, your silence
 Falls like an augury of ill, least fitting
 Of any to a day like this.

Soph. (R. c.) Oh, Hero ! [*Crossing, L*
 Do not question me. I have not known (too late
 I find it,) all my spirit's weakness.—Oh !
 What an inconstant thing is woman's will !
 On what a trifle may the happiness
 Of whole existence hang ! A summer wind,
 That is but air—nothing—may turn an argosy ;
 And the poor word in weakness uttered,
 Hath power to bind, beyond release or hope,
 A life's whole destiny.

Hero. The Gods have made
 Thine their especial care.

Soph. Ah ! yes !

Hero. Sophronio, some grief is at your heart ; may I
 not share it ? [*Sophronia avoids her.*
 This is not like yourself, Sophronia—friend—
[*Sophronia returns, and they retire conversing.*

Enter FULVIUS and CHREMES, R. U. E.

Chre. (R.) Why, Fortune must have ta'en her bandage
 off.
 To shower such graces on you. You must dedicate
 A temple to the goddess.—From the Emperor ?
 Sent for to Rome already ?

Fulv. (R. c.) I have here
 The letters which command my presence there.
 I am promised honors. If you be not bound
 Too closely to your native city, Chremes,
 Let not this change divide us.—Share my fortunes,
 And be to me a memory of what.
 Gisippus was, till love made friendship light.

Chre. (L.) We'll speak of this again ere you leave
 Athens.

Did you not say he should have met you here?

Fulv. A little further on—

[*Fulvius fixes his eye on Sophronia, who is talking with Hero.*]

Chre. 'Twill be no grateful tidings for his ear,
Those news of your return to Rome.

Fulv. That form !—

Chre. You do not think of leaving till the festival
Be past?

Fulv. How dim and wavering is the recollection
That stirs within me? There's some faint similitude
To an old memory, I cannot now
Distinctly summon up.

Chre. What's this? Why gaze you so?

Fulv. It is the loveliest form I've looked upon
Since I have entered Athens!

Chre. It is, indeed,
A bust for Dian's self!

Fulv. If she had left
Her wild wood for the portal of her temple,
To give her votaries a visible *audit*,
She could not move my admiration more.
I'll speak to her!

Chre. You cannot think it, sure?
This is some lady of high estimation!
You are changed, indeed! What plea have you to offer?

Fulv. I care not. Let chance, which gives the occasion,
Be kinder yet, and furnish me with matter.

Chre. You are a madman! [Stopping him.

Fulv. "You are a coward! Off!
"A pitiful, dull trembler. Hark you, sir:
"Go you and marvel yonder, at her state,
"And see it bend to me.—'Twill do so! Hush!"
Be dumb—she speaks!—

Chre. You will not be advised?

Fulv. Psha! No—away!— [Exit Chremes, R. U. E.
Now, by Cytherea,

Here is no common beauty! Would she but lift
That veil! There is a sadness in her air
And motion. Oh! if that veil hide beneath it.
A sorrowing brow, when shall a smile be worshipped?

Soph. [To Hero, coming a little forward, L.]

But, trust me, since that fatal "yes" was wrung from me,
I have not rested. You must come more frequently,
Else I grow serious as the fate that waits me.

Farewell ! I wait Gisippus here. [Exit Hero, l.

Fulv. (*Aside.*) Gisippus, !

Some fair friend of the bride—

Sophronia, coming forward, c., suddenly meets Fulvius, and starts back.

Soph. Ah, heaven !—

Fulv. Your pardon, lady :

Do ye start from as it were a speetre
That crossed your daylight path ?—" You shake and trem-
ble !

" These groves are silent, but not desolate,
" And many ears are waking near you. Say,
" What is there in an honest face to terrify you ?
" As sure mine seems no other."

Soph. (*Aside.*) It is Fulvius !

'Tis the same gallant air—the noble form
That caught my first affection—Years have made
But little change upon him.

Fulv. (*Aside.*) How she regards me !

Soph. He knows me not ! [Seeming to go

Fulv. Lady, you will not go,

Leaving me thus unsatisfied ?

Soph. I know ye not, sir !

Fulv. I am a Roman, and a friend of Gisippus !

A scholar, too, just weaned from the harsh studies
Of Your Athenian schools, and turning now
To and a gentler lesson in the fair
And varied volume Nature lays before me !
A diligent and most untiring learner,
Could I but hope

That most excellent pattern of her skill
This morning shows me, might continue ever
My study and my inspiration.

" *Soph.* You

" Are pleasant, sir !

" *Fulv.* I have a failing that way,—oh,

" Oh !

" Could you but feel the wrong you do that brow,

" When you would make it minister to scorn,

" No heart would mourn the absence of its light.

- " *Soph.* Vain men ! And do ye seek to cozen us
" With flattery so palpable as this ?
" You know it fair, and yet have never seen it !
" *Fulv.* But shall ?— [*Approaching her.*
" *Soph.* No !—Named you not Gisippus, Roman ?—
" *Fulv.* He is known to you ?
" *Soph.* He is.
" *Fulv.* His promised bride, too ?
" *Soph.* Should be my near friend.
" *Falb.* And we thus stand at distance !—Now, by Ne-
mesis,
" I thought we should be friends. I know not why,
" But though we sure have never met before,
" That form already grows upon my soul
" Familiar as memory of its childhood.
" Our sages teach, (and now I find them reasonable,)
" There is between the destinies of mortals
" A secret and mysterious coincidence,
" Drawn from one mighty principle of Nature ;
" A fixed necessity, a potent 'must,'
" That sways mortality through all its harmonies !
" That souls are mingled and hearts wedded, ere
" Those souls have felt the dawning of a thought ;
" Before those hearts have formed a pulse, or yet
" Begun to beat with consciousness of being !
" My heart is governed by a fate like this,
" And drawn to thee, unknown—unseen.
" *Soph.* Beware !
" I am your friend, and warn you. Trust me not :
" Earth never formed a being half so false.
" To him who shuns me, I can be more just ;
" To him who woos like thee, with heart on lip,
" A very icicle.
" *Fulv.* I will believe you !—
" 'Tis beautiful, and so art thou—'tis fragile,
" And false—so ye would have me think ye—Bright,
" So is thy beauty—sparkling as thy wit !
" 'Tis radiant as thy form ; and it is cold—
" And so art thou "
" *Soph.* I am a dull diviner ;
If that speech were not meant for one, a foolish friend
Of mine, at Corinth once, who threw her heart
Away, thinking it given to a Roman youth.

Fulv. At Corinth, lady—
Spoke you of Sophronia?

Soph. Why,
I named her not!—you've known her, then?

Fulv. I have.
I pray you, hear. There is a friend of mine—
A poor weak youth—On! hear me—for my life
Is wrapped in his, and that is failing fast.
He loved her—and she wronged him.—“Knew ye this?

“*Soph.* No, truly.—And yet I might say I knew her,
“(Her very heart) even as mine own.

“*Fulv.* She was
“The fairest, yet the falsest thing that e'er
“Made light of confidence.—Her eyes looked brightest
“When they were silent perjurers;—her voice
“Sweetest, when turned to deep deceit;—her smile.
“Pleasant as health, yet death's worst messenger!
“This is my memory of her.” Years, alas,
Have passed since I beheld her! Lives she?

Soph. Yes,
And for a new love. She has lived to learn
The wisdom of forgetfulness. 'Twill be,
Some comfort to your false friend, to hear this!

Fulv. Oh! I was never false—Proud I might be,
I am—but though in very stubbornness,
I steeled my heart against the scorn that pained it;
And like the slave, whose struggling in his chains
Makes them hang heavier and corrode more deeply,
The influence that I sought to smile away,
But clung more sensibly about my heart,
Binding it down unto its first affections
More firmly, while my laughing lip denied
The dear allegiance—Would Sophronia knew this!

Soph. Ay, if she had but known this!

Fulv. Ay, idle sorrow now;
For had I sought her and bowed down my heart
Yet lower than its boyish pride could stoop,
It were in vain, for she esteemed the fancied wrong
Her own and would have spurned the suit and me.

Soph. Oh, women have forgiving tempers, Fulvius:
You should have made the trial.

Fulv. Ha!—that tone!
I stand as one in mist—Am I deceived?—

Soph. But now, indeed, 'tis late. Sophronia is
In Athens—and forgiveness past her power

Fulv. (*Approaching her.*) The veil! In mercy! Oh,
my anxious heart

And throbbing brain! The veil! Nay, raise it, lady—
And snatch me from the agonizing dream—

“Say, do I err?

“Or does my heart deceive me, when it claims

“That voice, for one familiar with its oldest

“And best remembrances?” It grows upon me

More rapidly and surely—My Sophronia,

(*Kneels.*) Oh, my love! life! happiness?

[*She throws back the veil.*

Soph. Hold, there!

Fulv. No, no!

By thine own unchanged beauty, I do swear

I am as innocent of wrong to *ye*,

As aught in virtue or in truth!

Soph. It is too late:

I am no more mine own to meet thy faith,

Although I should believe it.

Fulv. Say thou dost;

[*Rising*

And where is he who dares dispute the consequence?

“I do remember somewhat, lightly spoken

“And hastily, (which thou wilt sure recall, love,)

“That chills my breast to think on. Nay, put off

“That distant air.—Wave not your hand thus coldly,

“As you would scatter sorrow with the action

“Upon the heart that loves you.” Register.

My pardon, even by a look, and say

Unkindness sleeps between us, and love wakes again.

Soph. It is too late, now.

Fulv. Wherefore? Are you not

The same free Grecian maiden? I can see

No mark of bondage on you.

Soph. But there is

A heavy bondage—I am bound.

Fulv. To me!

[*Eagerly taking her hand.*

Think you I could forget that vow, Sophronia?

Truth, love, and justice are my witnesses,

(And surely you will honor them,) the heart

That stilled its beating to record the pledge,

Tenders it yet—among its living pulses.
The dearest memory there !

Soph. This must be ended.

Fulvius—I am indeed—

Fulv. (*Interrupting her.*) Although my lips,
Which are the beauteous ministers of truth,
While virgin Truth herself, had sworn that, lady,
I still must disbelieve ye.

Soph. Then fare ye well—
The time must undeceive you.

[*Going, L.*

Fulv. Hold, Sophronia !
If any fearful, creeping, heartless slave,
Have made a base advantage—Oh, my blindness !
That I should leave to such a venom'd slanderer
The opportunity he dared not vindicate !—
But name him—and I will redeem thy pledge,
Though I should tear it from his heart, and give thee
A recking witness with it.

Soph. 'Tis a name
Will lay a quieter and heavier influence
Upon your spirit, Fulvius. You are sensitive
In friendship, as in love ?—

[*Music, Piano.*

Fulv. (*Starting back.*) Ha !

Soph. I am here
The mistress of the revel.—Hark ! Oh, heaven !
My lord approaches—Oh, forgive and leave me !

Fulv. Your lord ?

Soph. My husband—Gisippus ! Your friend !
Oh ! fly !

Fulv. My friend ?

[*Abstractedly.*

Soph. I fear your meeting.

Fulv. Oh !

Avenging Nemesis !—Oh, traitor, Hope !
What was there in the little store of peace
That I till now had laid unto my heart,
Thine eye should covet thus ?

Soph. (*Anxiously.*) He comes !

Fulv. (*Starting round.*) I am glad of it !

Soph. Mercy ! you would not—

Fulv. In his very teeth

I'll fling my charge—there let it stick, and blacken !

[*Crosses, L*

Ye bards, whose tales of Grecian faith are cherished

In strains that credulous fancy dotes upon,
Your ashes shall no more be hallowed now.
It was a lying spirit moved ye !—Hence !
Thou art become a plague unto my sight,
A blot and stain upou the virgin air.

[*Music is heard within, louder ; Sophronia, crosses, R.
and sinks on her knee.*

Oh, arise, my love !

How swift a shame runs burning through my veins !
You should not kneel—What, though you are heartless,
love,

You still are queen in this—Beautiful falsehood :
Ye have spells about ye—and I would curse,
Yet can but gaze into thine eyes, and bless thee.
What would ye I should do !

Soph. I've been to blame,
But now repentance is in vain. I fear
The anger of my lord—for I am now
Bound to obedience.—Seem not to know me, Fulvius !
The fate that's on us passion cannot alter,
But may confirm.

Fulv. Fear not.—I will be govered.

*Enter GISIPPUS, MEDON, CHREMES, Ladies Guests, &c.,
R. U. E.—Music plays while seats are arranged—Gisippus
leads Sophronia to a seat, L.—Fulvius remains unobserved,
leaning against a side scene up the Stage.*

Gis. Here in these silent groves we will attend
The lighting of the Hymeneal torch.
How pure, how holy is the sacrifice,
That waits on virtuous love ! How sacred is
The very levity we wake to honor it !
The fiery zeal that passion knows, is there
Tempered by mild esteem and holiest reverence
Into a still, unwasting, vestal flame,
That wanders nor decays. All soft affections,
Calm hopes and quiet blessings, hover round,
And soft Peace shed her virtuous dew upon it
No conscious memories haunt the path of pleasure,
But happiness is made a virtue.

Fulv. (R.) Ay !
An universal one—for truth and justice,

Honor and faith may be cast off to gain it,
Without one conscious shame.

Gis. How's this?

Soph. (*Lays her hand on his arm.*) Gisippus!

Gis. My love! What would you?

Fulv. (R.) Oh! must I endure this?

The action hath struck fire from out mine eyes—

I cannot hold—

[*Coming forward.*]

Gis. (c.) Ha! Fulvius! Oh, dear friend!

My happiness fell short of its completion,

Till you had given me joy.

Fulv. (R.) Why should it need?

The joy that conscious truth gives will wait on ye,

For surely you deserve it.

Gis. Friend and brother,

I thank you.

Fulv. Does the bride?

Gis. Nay! ye should spare her.

Fulv. Prudent friend! Wise lover! Now

I see the spring of your half confidences.

Gis. What doubt is this!

Fulv. Doubt! Oh! I know thee just;

I know thy tongue was honest—but I know, too,

The silent tales a glance may tell—the lies

That may be acted.

[*They all rise.*]

Gis. Ha!

[*Sophronia throws herself between.*]

Soph. Oh! heed him not:

There is some error—

Fulv. All the nods—the looks,

By which the absent fool is safely damned—

Ye would not slander me in words, I know it;

But there are ways.

Gis. (L. c.) (*Aside.*) What sudden, horrible fear,
Creeps o'er my frame?

There is no likelihood in that.

Fulv. Farewell!

Honest Gisippus, fare ye well! Sophronia,

I will not, for the last time, take your hand

With an ill word.

[*Kisses her hand.*]

Gisippus, this is all

Your friend claims from your bride—oh, she was worth

A double perjury! Oh, virtuous pair,

The happiness ye merit dwell about ye,
Till ye have learned to laugh at conscience. How!
Am I a wonder, that ye throng and gaze
Upon me! Have I marred the bridal? Oh!
Let it proceed and pardon me. Hearts worthier
Marriage ne'er blest; "take a friend's word for that—
"An undone friend, it may be, but that's little."
My last advice is—ye may ne'er remember
The name or fortunes of your ancient friend,
For there's a cause why that should breed ill thinking.
Farewell, Sophronia! Oh, true friend, Gisippus—
Farewell! farewell! [Exit, R.

Medon. (*Aside.*) What is the cause of this?

Pheax. Whate'er it be, Gisippus hath it now.

His looks betray it. Mark him!

Gis. (*L. c.*) Hold, my heart!

Rush not too quickly on a divination
So full of fear for thee. Sophronia?

Soph. (*R. c.*) I am here, Gisippus

Gis. Medon will attend you

To your chamber. I would speak with you alone—
I'll follow you.

Soph. (*L.*) My lord shall be obeyed.

[Exit with Medon, L.

Gis. (*c.*) Kind friends, your pardon for this interruption,
Which should not mar the festival—One hour,
While you attend a measure in the house,
I would bespeak your patience. Then I come to ye!

[Music plays while Chremes and the rest go out, leaving
Gisippus alone upon the Stage, L.

Gis. Corinth? The mystery of Fulvius—and
Sophronia's old affection? You great Gods,
I see my fate!—The sacrifice you ask
Is great and bitter.—You, who lay upon me
This heavy test, lift up my soul to meet
And wrestle with its potency: The hour
Is come at length, when the young votary, Virtue,
Must prove his worship real—when the spirit
Shall soar above all natural affections,
A wonder and a tale for days unborn,
Or sink, degraded, into self. My love?
My friend? How suddenly the word unmans me!

My heart is weak,—and I but pant and struggle
At the greatness I would master. Yet it shall be so.

[*Comes down.*

Sophronia shall be tried—and should she falter,
It must be done, although my strings of life
Crack in the doing. Oh! for one brief moment,
Lie still and cold, ye whispering ministers
That stir my blood with selfish doubts and wishes;
Dig memory, sense, and feeling from my brain
And heart, and make it steel to all but that
Which makes yielding painful!

[*Exit, L.*

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Athens.*

Enter FULVIUS and CHREMES, followed by LYCIAS and SERVANTS, L.

Ful. (c.) Friends let our train expect me on the hill,
Beside the villa of Gisippus. *Exeunt Lycias &c., R.*

Chre. Nay!

Why should you droop thus, Fulvius?

Fulv. (R.) I would

We had left Athens yesterday. I grieve
To think upon the wrong I did Gisippus,
And would return and see him once again,
To take a friendlier leave.

Chre. You should say, rather,
To see Sophronia once again, and make
Your parting yet more painful.

Fulv. No, I have wronged
My friend! The friend that would have died, ere injured
Me, or cast one moment's shadow o'er my heart.
He shall yet think better of me. *[Crosses, L.]*

Chre. Well, I seek not
To cross your wishes. But I pray you, tell me—
That gloomy-looking knave ye sent before
Just now: is he your slave?

Fulv. My freedman, Lycias.

Chre. It is impossible that there can be.
An uglier man !

Fulv. Or a truer.

Chre. Pish for his truth !

I would not keep such a face about my household
For all the truth in Greece. I have conceived
A strange antipathy against him. What
A dark and scowling glance the sulky slave
Shoots from beneath his shaggy brows !

Fulv. Beware !

Keep such thoughts in your breast, and live in peace :
He's a Phœnecian ; faithful—but revengeful.

Chre. Psha ! he shall know my mind a dozen times
In the hour. I'll whip him from his cut-throat looks.
He talks too little for an honest man ;
I'll teach him more civilized obedience,
Than that he showed you now when you spoke to him :
'Lycias, go bid our trains expect me.'—'Ugh !' Ha ! ha !
ha ! [Exit, R.

Fulv. I'll see her : once again will see Sophronia !
Why should I doubt my resolution ?—Yet,
If she should smile—and heaven is in that smile—
May she not win me back
To the delusions of my wooing hours,
And blind my vision to the onward path
That honor points to ? No, no, it must not
Grieve Gisippus to think upon our friendship.
He shall yet deem nobly of me.

Exit, L.

SCENE II.—*The House of Sophronia.*

Enter MEDON and SOPHRONIA, R. 3d. E.

Med. (L.) Away—tell me no more.

Soph. (C.) I have heavy reasons.

Med. They should be such, indeed, to o'erweigh that
You now have urged. Delay the bridal ! Bid
Our friends disperse, and keep their mirth unwasted
For another morn ? Fie ! fie ! Have you a name
To care for ? What a scandal will it bring
Upon our fame ! A man, brave, learned, honored,
Worthy the noble lineage he sprung from,
Worthy as fair a fate as thou couldst give him,
Were it made doubly prosperous. What think you,

Made you thus absolute? I'll know the cause
From which this fancy springs, or hear no more.

Soph. (L.) Then you shall hear no more, for while I live
The cause shall sleep within my lips, though none
But the ear of solitude should hear it spoken.

Med. (R.) Sophronia, I know well 'tis some device
To break this contract.

Soph. No, my brother.

Med. But

My heart is set upon it. His noble birth,
His eloquence, his influence in the city,
Are wanting to support our growing name.
My plans, hopes, all, are based on this alliance.

Soph. But to defer—

Med. Defer! Why did you promise?
Why did you mock us then, with your consent?
What shall be your next humor? We'll attend it.

Soph. Why should you be so quick to speak unkindness?
It was to please you, Medon, I consented;
I did not then look for a life of happiness,
But now I feel content shall scarce be mine.
Yet, as I hope for that, I swear to thee
I do but seek to meet the pledge I've given,
And with a firmer fortitude redeem it.

Enter GISIPPUS, R. 3d E.

I have no other hope. Oh! brother, if
Indeed you would be deemed such, grant me this,
And—ha! he is here—

Gis. I am sorry that I startle you,
Medon; what is there in your gift, Sophronia,
Should sue thus humbly for, and find you cold?

Med. I would not have it known—and if she holds
My love at aught, she will be silent on it. [*Exit, R. 3d E.*]

Gis. (R. c.) Forget this peevish bickering of your brother,
And hear me speak.

Soph. At least Gisippus, you
Can have no cause to chide!

Gis. Why, there, Sophronia!
How like a conscious one you spring to meet
The shadow of an accusation.

Said not I came to chide you ; but indeed
You've judged aright, and you shall hear my charge !
The promise you have pledged me, you redeem
In words ; your looks are cold ; they freeze my heart
And tell me it is cheated with a mask
Of constrained seeming.

Soph. Whither does this lead ?

Gis. Your converse, friendship, fortune,
You say are mine. But I would yet be lord
Of more than these ! without it, they are valueless.
'Tis an ideal good, excelling substance—
'Tis trust, 'tis confidence, Sophronia.

Soph. Nay, there, at least, I'm free.

Gis. Indeed, you are,
And therefore 'tis I value it and seek it.
Give me your hand. (*Takes her hand.*) “ You've had
proof of my love,
“ Now try me further.” Lay your heart before me,
Naked as it appears to your own thoughts,
With all its aspirations. You may find
That I can act as worthy and as free
A part, as if I ne'er had stooped so low,
To win the love that hath at last deceived me
For though my heart can witness I do prize
That love beyond the life-blood that flows through it
I would not weigh it 'gainst your happiness,
The throbbing of one pulse—now believe and trust me.

Soph. You are too noble !

Gis. No !—no !—

Do not think that, Sophronia ;
Nor let your generous fear to wound a heart
Too sensitive, affect your confidence.
The rigid schools in which my youth was formed,
Have taught my soul the virtue that consists
In mastering all its selfish impulses !
And could I bring content into your bosom,
And bid that care that pines your delicate cheek,
And pales its hue of bloom, (fit paradise
For the revelry of smiles !) resign his throne there
My heart without a pang, could lose ye ! (*Aside.*) How
It burns, while I belie it !

Soph. I have heard you

With wonder, that forbids my gratitude.
 How have you humbled me ! Oh, Gisippus !
 I will deceive you yet—for you shall find,
 Although I cannot practice yet I know
 What greatness is, and can respect it truly ;
 I would requite your generosity,
 And what I can, I will. Do not distrust me
 From any seeming ! I have plight my promise,
 And it shall be fulfilled.

Gis. My fears were just, then ?

Soph. Let them be banished now ! My noble monitor,
 When I shall make advantage of your goodness,
 Virtue forswear me ! You have waked my heart
 To duty and to honor they shall find
 An earnest votary in it.

Gis. Duty and honor !

Ye have spoken it worthily, Sophronia.
 Yet these are cold words—Oh ! how beautifully
 That fiery carriage shows upon ye ! How
 Ye shine and sparkle in your hourly changes !
 Oh, woman, what an empty boaster man is,
 When he would strive against your empire ! How,
 When he would soar at lonely excellence,
 Ye cling upon him with your potent weakness ;
 And when he is content to creep beside ye
 In the dull circle of material happiness,
 Ye fire him to a longing after greatness.
 He hath the strength of the huge ocean-wave ;
 But you—you are the planet by whose influence
 It mounts or falls. Have you spoke this too hastily ?
 Or do you feel that firmness in your nature,
 Which you have quelled in mine ?

Soph. The guests attend us ;
 If you will longer hesitate, I'll doubt
 The welcome my assent meets.

Gis. (*Kisses her.*) Beautiful miracle !
 Oh ! you shall find how dearly I esteem it.
 Farewell ! I will but see all placed in readiness
 Without, and then attend you. Oh, you have sent
 Joy like a strong light, through my darkened spirit ;
 Farewell ! the rite shall be prepared. [*Exit, R. S. E.*]

Soph. (*L.*) The sacrifice—

The double sacrifice ! We have been made.
The victims of our own caprice.

Enter NORBAN, R.

Nor. ophronia,
Fulvius would speak with you.

Soph. Ha ! Peace ! Where is he ?
Not for the world ! Away.

Enter FULVIUS, R.

Fulv. The wings of peace
Shelter your heart, Sophronia, though they leave
Those that have loved you comfortless !

Soph. Your coming
Is most ill-timed. I would not for thy life
Gisippus saw ye here. Norban !

Nor. I am here, Sophronia.

Soph. Remain on this side, and be sure you warn me
When Gisippus returns !

Nor. I will obey you.

Soph. Why have you come ?

Fulv. " You are so dear to me,
" So coiled and wound about my heart, that I
" Am glad to find my presence is unwelcome to you."
I come to take my leave, forever !

Soph. How ?

Do you leave us, then, indeed ?

Fulv. I am for Rome.

The path of wordly fame and honor lies
Smiling before me. All the dignities
That young ambition covets may be mine,
And fair success invites me like a bride.
How joyously my spirit once had leaped
To meet her smile, and merit it ! But now,
Its earliest impulse hath been chilled and wasted—
Its earliest hope o'erthrown.

Enter GISIPPUS quickly, R. U. E., behind Norban, unseen by him.

Gis. Fulvius !

[*Starts back.*

Soph. Do not speak thus, Fulvius.

This is not manly in you.

Fulv. Oh, my love !

(For I must call you such, though I have lost you,)
You have bereft me of all nobleness,

[Norban turning accidentally, discovers Gisippus and starts. Gisippus grasps his arm, points to his dagger, and motions him off. Norban departs.]

And made me what you should condemn.

Gis. (Aside.) A watch set, too !

This is the bride now,—this—“ Oh, my prudent woman—

“ Angel and devil in one hour !” My friend, too !

Peace ! peace !

Soph. Nay, look not thus dejected, Fulvius

Think it is our fate which masters us,

And strive against it firmly,

Fulv. Alas ! sweetest,

You counsel me in vain. Do not despise me,

That I am wanting in that stern command

Of natural feeling, and that scorn of circumstance,

That shields the breast of Gisippus.

Gis. (L. U. E.) Well put,

Wy friend !—This is the friend—the bridegroom’s friend !

Ha ! torture !

Fulv. Do not envy me the luxury

Of yielding to the pressure of my fortune.

“ The heart is not mechanical—nor owns

“ The empire of the will.

“ It is the universal law of nature,

“ That where the hand of suffering presses hard,

“ Complaint should follow.” There is a relief

In the abandonment of utter sorrow,

That only sufferers know !

Soph. Weak sufferers, Fulvius ;

The unreasoning slaves of impulse and excitement.

Would you depress your nature, to the level

Of mindless—nay, even of inanimate things ?

The victim at the stake will howl and whine ;

The plant, unwatered, droops ; but man should meet

The malice of his fate with firmer carriage.

“ Alas ! look on the life of the happiest here ;

“ What is it but a war of human pride,

“ With human suffering ? the mind, the soul

“ In arms against the heart ! their ally, reason,

“ Forcing the aching wretch to suffer greatly,

“ And own influence of fate. !” What still

Unmanned at parting? Pray you, Fulvius,
Resolve me this.

Fulv. What is't you ask?

Soph. Suppose—

(I do but dream now while I speak of this,)
But say that it were possible our loves
Might yet be favored!

Fulv. Ha!

Soph. Beware, young Roman!
I speak this as a dreamer. But suppose
Gisippus, who you know is worthy,
And loves you as a friend—

Fulv. Alas, I've proved that—
But ill requited him.

Soph. I pray you hear me.
Suppose your friend should give me back the promise
That I have plighted—(Oh, most unwillingly!)
And leave me free to make my own election,
Wrong or dishonor set apart.

Fulv. I hear ye.

Soph. How would my freedom move ye?

Fulv. (*Rapturously.*) As my life
Restored beneath the lifted axe.

Soph. We should rejoice, then?

Fulv. We should pale the front,
The Afric front of night, with revel lights,
And tire her echoes with our laughter!

Soph. Ay!

And Gisippus would laugh, too.

Fulv. Ha!—

[*Droops.*

Soph. He'd be

The loudest reveller amongst us. Ay,
We should be famed in story, too. The best,
The truest friends—self-sacrificers!—Oh!
Our monuments should be the memories
Of every virtuous breast,—while Gisippus
Might find his own dark tomb, and die forgotten.

Fulv. What mean you?

Soph. Cast aside that dull respect
“Of fair opinion and the world's esteem,
“Which is the death of many a happiness.—
“You are for Rome? Our fate is in our hands—
“The world may call it perjury in me,

"In you, foul treachery—but we can live
"Without the world's approval, (can we not?)
"And laugh at self-reproach, too?"

Fulv. Sweetest warner,
Mine honor is not dead, though it hath slept—
What would you do?

Soph. I'd wake that worthiness
Within you which I know you own. Oh! Fulvius,
You now may see how dearly I have loved you,
Since I had rather lose you—(Ay, my first
Old idolized affection!)—than behold you
Second to any in your own esteem.

Fulv. In yours and virtue's, never!—Do not fear it—
I came to take my last farewell, Sophronia.
Come; I can throw my helm upon my brow,
And shake my crest upon the battle-field,
And bare my bright steel with a grasp as firm
As his whose arm is nerved by glory's zeal,
Not by the madness of a broken heart.
An honorable cause—a fiery onset—
A peal of war—a hush!—one thought on thee!—
And there's an end of Fulvius and his love!

Gis. (*Coming forward a little.*) That speech was like
"ye, Roman!"

Soph. Oh, now you are
The gallant soul you have been; and shall be
The cherished memory of my heart. "Oh! Fulvius
"It is a sullen fortune that subdues us.
"But we have trifled with her early smiles,
"And now must strive against her hate." Farewell!
Forget me, and be happy.

Fulv. It must be
My solace to remember you, Sophronia,
But only as a rightful sacrifice
To honor and to friendship. Dear Sophronia,
Let me be careful of his peace, to whom
The Gods have given you now. He knows not yet
Of our affection. Let him never know it.
Time, absence, and the change of circumstance,
May wean me from your memory—never droop
Your head to hear it, and you may yet be
To Gisippus—all—but away with that—

Farewell, at once, forever !

[They are separating, when Gisippus advances quickly.]

Gis. (c.) Stay, Sophronia !

Soph. (R.) Ha ! we are lost !

Gis. "Lost ? How ? Why ? wherefore, lady ?"

You, Fulvius, too ! Look on me calmly, Roman.

You've known me long—beheld me in all changes,

And read my spirit in its nakedness.

In what part of my life have I betrayed

A mean or selfish nature ?—Ay ! that gesture

Would tell me—never !—Wherefore am I, then,

So worthless of your confidence, I must

Turn eaves-dropper to gain it ? Not a word !—

You were eloquent but now. Ha ! ha ! You'll say

You had an inspiration then—

Fulv. (R.) Gisippus—

Gis. Now, can it anger you, that I have played

A mirthful humor on ye both ? I've known

Long since of this, and did but seek to punish ye

For your distrust.—Oh, I have laughed at ye—

To see your fears, and must again—*[Aside.]* O Gods,

My brain is scorched !—

(Puts his hand to his forehead and pauses.)

Fulv. What mean you, Gisippus ?

Gis. You say right, I was wrong to trifle with you,

But now the jest is ended—I shall laugh,

No more—oh, never—never !

I pray you, pause one moment—

Fulv. My kind friend !

Gis. *(Rising slowly, and assuming a gradual firmness.)*

Come this way, Fulvius ! Sweet Sophronia !

(I must no longer call thee my Sophronia !)

Give me your hand too. As you gave this hand

To me, even while your heart opposed the deed,

I give it now to one who loves you dearly,

[Joins their hands]

And will not find that heart against him. There,

You are one. And may the Gods who look upon

Those plighted hands, shower down upon your heads

Their choicest blessings. May you live and grow

In happiness ; and I will ask no other,

Than to look on and see it ; and to thank

My fate that I was made the instrument
To bring it to your bosoms.

Fulv. Oh, my heart's physician !

Was this indeed designed, or do you mock us ?

Gis. This way a secret passage will conduct you
To the Temple porch. Medon I know has set
His soul upon my marriage ; but let me meet
That consequence—the lightest. Haste—haste !—Your
bride waits ;

Nay, fly ! Stay not to question nor to speak ;
The interruption may give space for thought,
And thought may bring—madness ! Away ! the rite
Attends you. Medon is not there—nor any
Who may prevent you. With my sword and life
I will defend this passage.

[*Fulvius uses an action of remonstrance, but yields to the
impetuosity of Gis., and leads Soph. out, L. D. F.*

Gone ! Alone !

How my head whirls, and my limbs shake and totter,
As if I had done a crime. I have—I've lied
Against my heart. What think ye now, wise world ?
How shows this action in your eyes ? My sight
Is thick and misty—and my ears are filled
With sounds of hooting and of scorn—
What should I fear ?" I will meet scorn with scorn ?
It is a glorious deed that I have done.
I will maintain it 'gainst the wide world's slight,
And the upbraiding of my own racked heart !
Oh ! there I'm conquered !

[*Sinks into a seat, L. U. E., in a desponding attitude,
takes wreath from head and looks at it.*

HYMN.—[*Without.*]

When thy rite, as now,
By youthful tongues is spoken—
And youthful hearts record the vow
That never may be broken—
Loves like these, 'tis thine to bless ;
Their's is perfect happiness !
Loves like these, &c.

Chorus.

[*The Curtain slowly falls during the Chorus.*

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Public Place near the house of Sophronia.**Enter MEDON and FRIENDS, L.*

Med. Married to Fulvius? A free maid of Athens
Bartered unto a stranger!—All my schemes,
Each plan for our advancement, crushed and scattered—
But we can reach him. There is none amongst you
But is a Medon, friends?

All. Not one.

Med. Then all
Bear on their brows a portion of this slight
Gisippus throws upon our house. An age
Will not restore us the ascendant! What
May he deserve, who sunk our house in Athens?

1st Friend. A worse shame than he gave.

2d Friend. We'll send our slaves
To scoff him in the streets.

Med. I have a deeper penance for him :
Meet me an hour hence by the Areopagus, [*All cross, R.*
You shall know more.

1st Friend. We will not fail. [*Exeunt all but Medon, R.*

Med. Away, then !
He's ruined, and I am not sorry for it.
Ho ! Pheax !

Enter PHEAX, R.

Pheax. Do not stay me—I must find
Gisippus, and prevent his ruin—

Med. How—

Pheax. I fear to wait the telling—

Med. You may safely—
He will come this way shortly.

Pheax. There's a clamour
Among his creditors, with whom, indeed,
(For a philosopher) he is well provided,
And pledged, I know, beyond his means. They say
He gave away, with your Sophronia's contract,
The only hope of compensation left them ;
But now I met old Davus, the rich usurer,
Taxing his withered limbs to seek his pleader.

One shrivelled arm close pinioned to his side,
 The hand fast clenched upon a musty parchment,
 Which, next his skin, looked fair ; the other wandering,
 With bony fingers stretched, in the act to grasp,
 (Fit emblems of the miser's double craft,
Getting and keeping)—his small weasel eyes
 Glanced every way at once—his countenance
 Looked like a mask made out of an old drum-head,
 In which the bones at every motion rattled
 From mere starvation. Flesh is a garment, sir,
 Far too expensive for his use. Oh ! how,
 As he went hobbling by me, I did curse
 The law that has forbid the art of beating !

Enter GISIPPUS, R. S. E.

I never had so much ado to make
 My right foot keep the peace.

Med. (Aside.) I am glad to hear this—
 “Go you to Rome with Fulvius ?”

Pheax. “Ay, to-morrow—”
 Oh, Gisippus, I've sought you. You are like
 To speed ill, if you tarry here.

Gis. (Crosses, L.) Trouble me not—I know it.

Pheax. (R.) There are three of them
 Have ta'en possession of your villa. Nay ;
 'Tis said the sale of that will not half quit
 The charges you have drawn upon your state,
 And they assail your person—Darus has
 Already sued for that.

Med. (L.) So Gisippus—

Gis. (C.) So, Medon—

Med. This is all you merit now
 From me, I am sure. You soon shall find that I
 Esteem the wrong you have done me, at its value !—
 Your jeering shall not serve. How will you excuse
 Your thankless slight ?

Gis. (L.) Good Medon, I have nothing,
 Nothing to offer in excuse ; my foul
 And heinous crime must e'en lie on my head ;
 And so—good day.

Med. I've something for your ear first.

Gis. You look like one who would not be at peace
 With the world, nor with himself. If it be so,

You could not find a wretch in Greece more apt
To meet you at midway, than he who stands
Before you now.

Med. I am very sure of that ;
But you mistake my resolution quite :
You shall have deeper cause, soon, for this bravery :
'There's Davus, in whose danger you are placed,
He will be crying for his sesterces :
Look not to me for aid.

Gis. To thee ? away !
Vain and presumptuous man ! I hold thee not
So high in my esteem to be thy debtor,
If thou should'st sue for it.

Med. You shall hear from me. [Exit, R. S. E.]

Pheax. (R.) This is his nature.

Gis. (c.) Oh ! I blame him not.
We that do study things in their first cause,
Are not so quickly moved by the effect :
'Twas his fate that denied him so much heart
To comprehend
An act of free, disinterested friendship,
Of friendship and of love, deep love, Sophronia !
Gods !—there are men upon this earth, who seem
So mixed and moulded with this earth—so like
Mere, dull, material engines—that for all
The purposes for which man looks to man,
It were as well a piece of curious mechanism
Walked in humanity's name, and wore its semblance.
“ Enter THOON, R.

“ Oh ! you are come ?”

Pheax. I much fear Medon's malice
May work some evil 'gainst you : I will follow him,
And bring you news, should any danger threaten. [Exit.]

‘ *Gis.* Well, what says Davus ?

“ *Thoon.* He says you have deceived him villainously,
“ And he will give no time.

“ *Gis.* Did you not tell him
“ That which I bade you, as touching Fulvius ?

“ *Thoon.* I did, and so much mercy found I in him,
“ He gave you one whole hour to try that chance.

“ *Gis.* Chance ? Pish !—Ah, heaven ! they are here !”
I thank you, Pheax—Davus and minions ! [Seeing them, R.]

Enter DAVUS and OFFICERS, R.

Davus. Yonder's your prisoner.

Gis. Where's the time you promised?

Davus. I am changed,
And will not thrust you—Fulvius is for Rome.

Gis. I tell you now again, as I have said,
You shall not be defeated of your own.
Before night elose I will satisfy you,
But leave the means to me.

Davus. I will not take
The promise of a sybil, if the certainty
Rest in my hands. Advance!

Gis. Then, by the Gods, [Drawing.
My freedom shall be dearer than my life,
Or his who dares assail it.

Davus. Heed him not—
You've numbers, and authority to aid you.

Gis. They shall be needed.

Enter FULVIUS and NORBAN, L

Fulv. Hold! hold! Gisippus—

[*Gisippus crosses quickly to Davus.*

Gis. (*Apart to Davus earnestly.*)
By the honor of my name—by all I've lost,
And all I hope to gain—I swear to you,
You shall be satisfied before to-night;
But leave me now—and free till then.—Hush! speak not—
My hope—life—hangs upon it!—Let me pray you,—
I will deserve this kindness.—At my villa—
Thou knowest the spot—You'll find me grateful, Davus.

[*Davus, &c., go out, R. Gisippus remains looking after them.*

Fulv. (*L. c.*) What men are these? What meant this
brawl, Gisippus?

Gis. (*R. c.*) Insolent knaves!—I was about to amerce
them for it,

Had you not crossed me. Words bred from a trifle,
And now forgot. Fulvius, I give you joy.

Fulv. Thanks for the cause.

Gis. I have something, Fulvius,
If you are not o'er pressed for time, to give
Your private ear.

Fulv. Go to your lady, boy,—

I will attend her quickly.

[*Exit Norban, R.*

Gis. (Aside.) How shall I tell? Will it not appear
As I took my ground upon my claim and sought
The very time it could be least resisted?

Fulv. What, musing, Gisippus?

“What would you stay me for?”

“*Gis. (Aside.)* And yet—to think

“For such a—nothing—which, without regard

“To that which cannot be repaid, he owes me,

“And far above,

“My very life should now be put in question,

“Or more—my freedom here—

“*Fulv.*” What syllogism

[*Advancing to him.*

Do you hunt down now, Gisippus? Pray you, jump
To your conclusion, and dismiss me quickly.

Gis. I am glad to see your ancient spirit live again.

(*Aside.*) I do him wrong to hesitate—

Fulv. Gisippus—

Thus do we stand. My time is limited

By her, to whom, as yet, I owe it all;

You can allow for this?

Gis. Indeed! so absolute?

Well, I will not obstruct your pleasures, Fulvius—

You had better leave at once.

[*Crosses, L.*

Fulv. Psha!—now you are angry.

Gis. Come—I will tell thee that which troubles me,
And in a few words. When your Sophronia—

Re-enter NORBAN, R.

Nor. A message from the Quæstor.

Gis. So soon cut short!

Enter a CENTURION, R., who gives a scroll to Fulvius.

Fulv. Come to prevent my wishes?—(*Reads.*) Ha! my
friend—

Now give me joy, indeed. I'm greeted here

With an appointment from the Emperor,

In the Eastern wars—If fortune hold her humor,

I shall be rich in every happiness

That friendship, love, and honor can bestow—

As the mad promise of the wildest hope

That ever killed Content.

Gis. Your joy is mine—

Ful. I have a faith in that.

Gis. Now, Fulvius, hear me—

Ful. (*To Centurion.*) If memory err not widely, 'tis
four years

Since, in those very regions, Anthony

Unwove the web Ventidius had spun

With Roman toil, and dyed with Roman blood.

You served him in those wars?

[*Centurion bows.*

Come to my house,

[*Crosses, R.*

You are my guest until we leave together ;

We will retrieve the shame of that discomfiture,

And call young glories from Armenian fields

To grace the statues of our children's children.

[*Exit with Norban and Centurion, R.*

Gis. Why, welcome, then, imprisonment and ruin ?

Light-hearted youth ; and yet it is but lightness.

“ 'Tis true, a gift not freely given, is none,

“ And gratitude itself is compensation ;

“ Then what care I, if his remain unpaid ?”

Re-enter FULVIUS, R.

Ay, memory, have ye woke ?

Fulv. I had forgot—

Friend ! Gisippus !—

Gis. I thank thee, Fulvius—

I thought you should not leave me. Did you know

How deep a fear thy coming hath dispersed,

You'd say I had a cause—

Fulv. What fear ?

Gis. No matter—

'Tis gone—you are returned—“ and I am satisfied”—

I will suspect no more.

Fulv. Did you, then, doubt me ?

I had forgot—you told me 'twas a matter

Of serious import that you wished to speak on.

Gis. And so it is. But at some other time

I can detail it more at ease—you're now

Too happy to attend me. Will you promise

To come this even to my villa, near

The suburbs, and I'll give you all.

Fulv. Most willingly.

Gis. You bridegrooms have short memories. Will you strive

To keep it on your's, Fulvius?

Fulv. Good Gisippus,

I will not swear ; but I will say, indeed,
The friendship I profess lies not wholly
Upon my lip, as that request would say ;
'Twill be no toil to keep it on my memory.

Gis. Enough. Let ruin shake her wintry wings
Over my sunny fortunes—blight and darken them !
Let blistering tongues be busy with my name,
And that—and all the comforts I have known
Pass from me, to return no more. Thou, Fulvius,
Shall have no part in the dread consummation,
And I can bear it calmly.

Fulv. Yet I hope
You ne'er may need that consciousness

Gis. I thank thee,
And it is my hope, too. Farewell, my friend ;
But fail not of your word, if you would have
That hope made true. Hope is not kin to fate,
And there's a discord when they meet and jar,
The heart's ease dies to witness. Fare ye well !

(Exit Fulvius, R.)

I am a truster—and, I fear, a fond one,
And yet could doubt.—What, Pheax ?

Enter PHEAX rapidly, R. S. E.

Pheax. Oh, Gisippus !

Gis. What is the matter? Give your wonder words.

Pheax. You are my friend. Oh, I have a tale for you ;
Gisippus, if you take my counsel,
You'll not remain in Athens.

Gis. Not remain
In Athens?

Pheax. No—'tis known—

Gis. What's known?

Pheax. That you
Have given Sophronia to the Roman

Gis. Oh !
They know it? I am glad of it. They know
That I have given her to her ancient love,
And my first friend. What do their wisdoms say ?

Upon this novel guilt? If it be crime
To give my heart, life, soul, away—
For thou to me wer't all, Sophronia—if it be a crime
To tear up my own comfort by the roots,
To make a garland for another's head,
Then I have sinned most deeply, and my reason
Shall venerate their censure.

Pheax. Oh, Gisippus!
You jest, upon a mine—You are in peril!
All Athens is incensed against you and
Your Roman friend: they practise on your safety
Even this moment they are met
Before the Arcopagus.

Gis. I pray you, *Pheax*,
What statute in our code makes giving penal?
Cold, miserable slaves!

Pheax. Nay, 'tis not so;
The charge is deep and foul.

Gis. What is it?

Pheax. I dare not say it.

Gis. Come, come, out with it! Quick!
There is more daring in your silence.

Pheax. Thus, then,
They have spoken loudly of your wants, my friend,
And Fulvius' wealth. You start? Ay, that's the charge!
They trump it to the state that you have had
Mean views in this. But it has struck you deep—
You do not speak? You do not answer me?

Gis. I cannot speak my thought! I'm wonder! rage
And wonder, all! (*Pauses.*)

The furies tear their hearts—lash them with worse
Than the fell stings they've cast on mine! Gods! what!
Make venal that I gave my peace to purchase;
And to my friend!—Give me the slanderer's name,
That I may tear the lying tongue from out
His jaws, and "trample on the—I am choked;
"I cannot find a voice to curse them.

"*Pheax.* Friend!

"*Gis.* Gold! trash!

"What! truck and barter name and happiness?
"Who could have dream'd this? Oh! this stabs home!
"Though that the devil of gain had mastered so
"Men's hearts—they felt and owned no warmer impulse.

"None but a devil could have foreseen a slander
"So tainting and so foul. Pah ! it is vile !"

Pheax. Let it not move you thus.

Gis. Let it not move me !

I tell thee, were this calumny but breathed
In the silence of the night to a deaf ear—
Could I but know that it was born in thought,
Though never uttered—'twould move me more than ruin,
Than loss of wealth, and every temporal good.
But told through Athens ! registered in her courts !
Oh, Jove, destroy my consciousness at once,
And that way give me rest.

Pheax. But Fulvius—

Gis. Ay, well thought on. Fulvius !
You'll meet him ere this even. Whatever fails,
Bid him remember his appointment with me.
These troubles rush in floods upon me now,
And I must ask another hand to stem them.

Pheax. Where do you meet, then ?

Gis. At my villa.

Pheax. There !

You are deceived, my friend.

Gis. He has promised.

Pheax. Trust me,
He cannot do it.

Gis. I tell thee, he hath promised.

Pheax. He has deceived you, then.

Gis. How ! On my need !

Deceive me ?—Fare you well ! Believe me,
You are deep in error, sir.

(Exeunt severally, Gis. L., Pheax, R.)

SCENE II.—*Before the Villa of Gisippus.—Evening.*

Enter FULVIUS and ATTENDANTS, R.

Fulv. Your lady is before ?

Atten. She waits your coming.

Fulv. (L.) Stay ! is not this the villa of Gisippus ?—I
cannot stop now.

Come—follow—I will send a packet to him,
To tell him of this sudden chance. The train
Is gone before ?

2d Atten. It is, my lord.

Fulv. Away, then ! *(Exeunt, L., Fulvius writing.)*

“Enter GISIPPUS.

“Gis. I'll have thee only—let them take all else,
“My natal bower, home of my infancy,
“My hope's first nurse thou wert, and thou shalt be
“The tomb of its decline. Hark ! hush ! a stir?

(Goes towards the villa.

“All's still as death ! Davus has not been here
“With his minions. Fulvius, too, not yet arrived !
“He's not impatient in it—and yet, weighing
“His feelings now, by those which once were mine,
“His stay should not make me so. Soft you ! Chremes !
“Appointed, too, for travel ! (Enters the house.”

Enter PHEAX, CREMES, LYCIAS, and three Slaves with
luggage, R.

Chre. Go, overtake thy comrades.

Here, did he say ? *(To Pheax.*

Pheax. (R.) Who, my friend ! Medon ? Yes ?
 He bade me tarry here but for one hour,
 He would attend you.

Chre. I cannot stay his snail-paced movements ; Fulvius,
 I see, is hurrying on—we must overtake him !
 Haste, fellows ! You wait Gisippus here.

Pheax. Ay, and could wish it were with more of com
 fort.

Chre. Medon and I escort the bride to Rome.
 Lycias !

Lyc. (L.) Well !

Chre. (c.) Now,
 What think you of this honeymoon travelling ?
 How will it meet the approval of your lady ?

Lyc. I busy not myself about my betters,
 But to obey them.

Chre. You are right.

Lyc. I wanted not
 Your word for that.

Chre. I have a strange foreboding
 That you and I will quarrel one day.

Lyc. Like enough.

Chre. Thou art the most ill-favored knave !

Lyc. I am glad
 You think so.

Chre. Why?

Lyc. I shall think better of
My looks from this day forward

Chre. Do I lie, then?

Lyc. Few Greeks make much of that.

Chre. Go, join the train;
But that thou art an useful slave, and I
Have weightier matters now upon my hands,
I'd beat respect into thee!

Lyc. Hate and hypocrisy
May come that way—Respect's a sturdier fellow.
But that *you* are my master's friend, you should not
Repeat that threat, Greek! [*Exit Lycias, l.*]

Chre. Did you ever see such an ill-conditioned slave?
But fare ye well :—Dull life for you in Athens,
Whilst we are revelling in Rome. Tell Medon
I could not tarry. I must needs see Fulvius,—
He's yet in sight. Farewell. [*Exit Chremes, l.*]

Pheax. Farewell, good Chremes.
Too light of heart e'en for a passing thought,
That bears gloom with it. Gisippus not arrived!
Oh, my friend!

Enter GISIPPUS from the house, R. S. E.

You are true to your appointment.

Gis. (*Advancing, R. c.*) Is it a fault?

Pheax. (*l.*) Now, I'll be sworn you have not yet for-
given me
For doubting Fulvius.

Gis. And did you doubt him?

Pheax. No. You say truly : him I do not doubt ;
His will, I am sure, is true—It is the circumstance
Prevents him from fulfilling his engagement.

Gis. Prevents him?

Pheax. Why, you surely do not now
Expect him?

Gis. Pheax, I beseech you leave me,
Your jesting is ill-timed.

[*Crosses, l.*]

Pheax. You are too petulant,
My friend. Have you not heard that Fulvius
Has been commanded for Armenia?

Gis. All hath been told me. Now, I pray you, go!
I know he has had letters of such import.

And that he will obey them and depart
To-morrow even.

Pheax. This even, my friend.

Gis. To-morrow even—

Pheax. (R.) This even—

This night—this very hour—he hath arranged

All. There has been a second messenger,

To bid him to the camp this very hour.

Chremes goes to Rome, with Medon and Sophronia ;

Nor is it like they will again behold

Your friend, 'till the campaign be ended.

Gis. (L.) Pheax ! my friend !

Pheax. Nay—

I seek but to prepare you for the truth !

I will not answer thee

In words ; but look you yonder !

[*Pointing off, L.*

'Tis his train—

You know he bade them wait on yonder hill.

Gis. I see it !—but—but—“ O, ye mighty Gods,
Can there be truth in this ? ” He is not with them !

He has sent his train before, and carries yet,

To—Ho ! they disappear along the hills,

“ And if he lied in speaking of the time,

“ Why may not all be false that he has uttered ? ”

The Gods do know I fear the consequence

No *tithe*, so much as finding my heart fooled

In its free confidence. You still look doubtingly :

Do you think he will deceive me ? Do you think

He will not come ? Have I given up my love, my all,

To worthless hands ? Do you think—Oh, peace ! I will

As soon cower on my knee, and dread the toppling

Of far Hymettus on my villa here,

As a fall in Fulvius' friendship, or the word

He once hath plight. I stand upon his honor,

And 'tis proud ground. Oh, I can laugh at doubting.

[*A distant shout is heard.*

What are those sounds ?

Pheax. (R.) Do you not know your cause

Is now in question ? I came to tell the news,

Which I am grieved to utter—but 'tis true,

That it goes hardly forward.

Gis. Let it go

Even as it will. I care not now : I'm heedless

Of all the external properties of life.
I have braced up my heart to meet the worst
That fate can cast upon my fortunes ; all
That men call evil, I can meet and suffer :
While one—one only fear is spared me.—

Enter CHREMES, with a scroll, L.

Chre. Fulvius sends—

Gis. (*Eagerly.*) Ha ! sayest thou ! Well ! Oh, unbeliever, look,
And let thy spirit blush for grace !—(*To Pheax.*) What says he ?

Where didst thou leave him ? How ? When will he come ?
Speak ! speak !—

Chre. He cannot come, Gisippus. [*Gisippus starts.*

Pheax. (*R.*) He is with his train—

Chre. (*L.*) He is far before it, Pheax. He has taken
horse

With the Centurion.

“ *Pheax.* (*To Gis.*) Look not on’t thus ghastly !
“ What is the consequence that makes you dread
“ His absence thus ? ”

Chre. He bade me say, this letter
Would give you his reason.

Gis. (*After a pause, taking the letter.*) Merciful Jove !
Is’t so ?

I was mistaken in thee, Fulvius. “ Honesty
“ Hath oft before been made the dupe of seeming.”
Look ! as I tear this scroll—
By the just Gods !

I thought there was but one true heart on earth,
And was deceived !—“ It is as black and false
“ As hell could make it.”—As I tear this scroll,
Piece after piece, and crush it in the dust,
So I abjure the wretch who mocked me with it,
For ever !—What !—Oh, I am dealt with,
Most justly—oh, most merily—“ Mighty heaven !
“ I cannot see well yet”—Forgot !—Forsaken !

Pheax. (*L.*) I’ll write to him—

Gis. I’ll cleave thee to the earth,
If thou wilt say that word again !—No, no ;
“ The gratitude that must be roused from slumber

Is never worth the waking—Let it sleep ! [Shouts, R.
Again ! hark !—

Pheax. Be at peace, I see the citizens
Are coming forth. Remain : I'll soon return,
And tell thee of the issue. [Exit *Pheax*, R.

Gis. Now I would
That there were fierce wars in Greece ! Oh, Gods !
The comfort of a lawful suicide !
The joy of hunting after death, when life,
Grown hopeless, goads us to the chase ! the rapture
Of meeting him bare-breasted on the field,
Amid the roar of fight that shuts out thought,
And rushing to his blood-red arms, without
The fear of the high heaven's displeasure.

Re-enter PHEAX, R.

Pheax. Friend !

Gis. The judgment ? hath it passed ? Stay ! stay !
I read it in thine eyes. It is a doom
Too terrible. But—Well ! the sentence ?

Pheax. You've been decreed the slave of your chief
creditor,
Davius.

Gis. Not that ! A sword and buckler, Gods !
And an unfettered hand ! Then, fate, I dare thee
To prove my heart is softer than a man's
Should be. Cast me free upon the world,
With all my injuries upon my head,
I still will move your wonder—and mine own ;
But slavery ! Oh, Gods ! no, no ! [Crosses, R.

Pheax. There is
A way to shun it.

Gis. Oh !

Pheax. Fly !

Gis. Oh, cold ingratn !
That he should leave me thus ! 'Tis well—

Pheax. They come !

Gis. You do not—cannot feel how much he owes me !
But you are right, I am free yet !

[Rushing out, L., is stopped by Medon, with two or three
friends meeting him, L. S. E.]

Med. Not so.

Gis. Ha ! hence ! Thou causeless hater ! Art thou
come
To look upon the proud man's ruin ? Hence !
I have no part with thee.
Thou art to me a thing material,
Mindless and heartless—a mere physical hindrance ;
As such I put thee from my path, unmoved
And so forget thee.

*Enter DAVUS, accompanied by a SICILIAN MERCHANT, and three
Officers.—Gisippus is seized.*

Med. (L.) Ha ! How this scorn
Becomes the slave of Davus !

Davus. (To *Gis.*) Not *my* slave !
Oh, not my slave, indeed. I have sold ye, *Gisippus*,
To this worthy man. He sails for Sicily
To-night, and you must with him.

Gis. (c.) Sicily ?— [Pausing.
Ha !—Rome—I am content.

Davus. You would be proud
To know how dearly I have sold ye, *Gisippus*.

(Shows a parchment to *Gisippus*, which he hands to
Chremes.

Gis. Give this to—ha ! ha ! my young friend !—and
bid him
Bind it up with his laurels—Fare ye well !

[Gives his hand listlessly to *Pheax*.

Chre. All will yet be well, *Gisippus*.

Gis. Ay, like enough ;
Fare ye well.—Rome ?—(Aside.) It may be done.—Come
on ;

I am ready to attend you, sirs—the dust
Is on my head ; I'll be a patient bondsman.

[*Exeunt Medon and Chremes, L., Gisippus and the
rest, R.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A magnificent Ante-Room in the Palace of Fulvius, at Rome. Chorus and shouting heard without.*

HYMN.

Welcome home! welcome home!
Guardians of the weal of Rome.
Over land and over sea,
The eagle's wings spread gallantly.
Guardians of the weal of Rome,
Welcome home! welcome home!

[*During the Chorus, which is heard nearer and more distinctly, Soldiers cross from L. to R. S. E., with spoils and trophies, then enter the Servants.*

1st Ser. It is our lord.

They're now before the palace.

2d Ser. Haste, man, the show'll be past.

Are we too late?

[*To Macro, entering.*

Macro. No questions now: I've letters for Sophronia—
Lead me to her.

[*To Servant.*

You'll be in time for Fulvius;

He's now passing.—Lead on, sir.

[*Exeunt Macro and Servants, L. S. E.*

Enter MEDON and CHREMES, with NORBAN, L.

Med. Go, boy—wake up your lady.

Nor. She is ill, sir.

Med. She must not be ill, sir;

Ill on the morn of her lord's triumph!—Go—

He will be terribly angry if he come

And find her ill. Bid her get well again,

And speedily, if she would keep his favor.

Nor. I'll tell her so, sir.

[*Exit, R. S. E.*

Med. (R.) Do so, sir. I know

The cause of this: some new neglect from Fulvius.

Chre. (L.) Why do you let him treat your sister so?

Med. Why do I let him treat myself still worse?

These swift successes have completely changed him;

He's prouder than the emperor, and looks

On his old friends as they were born his bondsmen;

All but you, Chremes. You are still his friend.

His bosom counsellor; for poor Sophronia.

She is the first wife that was ever jealous
Of her husband's reputation.

Chre. We must let him
Tire of his high-flown wishes quietly.
Some check of fate may humble him, and turn
His heart into its old affections yet.

Enter SOPHRONIA attended by four Ladies, R.

Med. Good day, Sophronia—

Chre. (*Crosses to her.*) Madam, I have news for you
You will be glad to hear.

Soph. These letters and the din of shouting crowds
Have made them stale, good Chremes ;
But tell your news.

Chre. Your lord now enters Rome,
The Senate have decreed him an ovation
For his late conquests in Armenia.

Soph. How does he, sir ?

Chre. Still discontented.
He says, had th' Emperor been half so prosperous,
He had had a triumph, and fifteen days' thanksgiving !
But he must rest content with an ovation—
A poor ovation.

Soph. (*R.*) Nothing would content him—
The honors he aspires to, when he gains them,
Look mean and worthless in his eyes ; but this
Becomes not me to say.

Med. (*L.*) What, do you mourn
At this ?

Chre. (*C.*) He is made Prætor, too.

Soph. I would
I were once more in Athens—never knew
What love—nor what neglect was.

Med. Ay—I know
Who would have made a kinder husband.
You are sorry for your scorn of Gisippus.

Chre. Hush !

Soph. Have you heard of *him* since, Chremes ?

Chre. No, madam.

Soph. Poor Gisippus !—Nor told my lord his fate ?

Chre. Madam, I thought that would have been a vain
cruelty

Till I had found Gisippus, and given Fulvius
The power of yet redeeming past neglects.

Soph. Perhaps you were right.

Chre. Oh ! I am sure I was.

Soph. When may I look for Fulvius ! If he thinks
My welcome worth the having, he is sure of it.
I shall be glad to see him.

Chre. I pray you, seem so, madam,
He will be disappointed, else,
He was impatient, so he bade me say,

[*Distant shouts of 'Io.'*

Until the Senate's will dismissed him home,
To hear his sweetest welcome from your lips.

[*Shouts without, L., of 'Io the Prætor.'*

They come !

Med. 'Tis he, Sophronia !

[*Shouts.*

Officers. (*Entering, L.*) The Prætor !

Enter FULVIUS, attended, as from a triumph, L.

Fulv. Oh ! young Athenian,
I am glad to see thee ! From the general this—
This greeting from the Prætor—and a long kiss
From the Roman boy, who wound himself into
The heart of a proud lady some while since
By a temple porch at Corinth.

Soph. My dear lord !

Fulv. These weighty honors which my country throws
Upon my hands, wean me from quiet fast.
I would they let me stay in humbleness
With thee, and found some more ambitious mark
For favor. Ay, you smile, but it is true.

Soph. I would it were, Fulvius.

Fulv. It is, believe me. Come, where are your sports ?
I must have naught but smiles and happy faces
For these few days at least, the Senate gives me ;
But ever holiday looks from thee, Sophronia,
Come, let us see your revels. [*Shouts of 'Io.'—Exeunt all*
but Chremes and Lycias, R.

Chre. (*R.*) I saw thee grinning at the porch but now,
As I passed in : what meant ye ?

Lyc. (*L.*) Do not ask me :

I am at your command—give me your orders,
And let me go at once.

Chre. (*Crosses L.*) Then make all ready ;
Bid the dancers shake their legs and put their toes in
order,

And the musicians puff themselves into wind-gods,
Men of immortal lungs. Let the cook look to it :
If he so far forget his office as
The matter of a snipe's wing burnt, he dies !
We'll have him served up in one of his own dishes,
And save a goose by it.—Lastly, for thyself,
When you have done this, get into some corner,
And be not seen until the feasting's ended—
That face would mar all merriment.

Lyc. (*R.*) I hear you.

Chre. And no more silent jeers or sneering, if
You love unbroken bones.

Lyc. Pish ! pish !

Chre. (*c.*) Speak out, dog !
What say you ?

Lyc. I hate talking.

Chre. You hate everything,
I do believe.

Lyc. A great many.

Chre. Empty fool !
Where learned ye this affected sullenness !

You are ever growling—Do you never bite ?

Lyc. I have no cause.

Chre. Fool, knave ! Are these no cause ?

Lyc. None. Do your words pinch, maim, or wound
me ? Say,

I call you idiot—brainless boy—puffed beggar—
Do these words leave their marks upon ye ? Ha !

[*Chremes strikes him,*

You have done it now !—

[*Seizes Chremes, and draws a dagger*

Enter FULVIUS and MEDON, R. S. E.

Fulv. Ho ! Lycias ! how is this !
A dagger drawn in your lord's house ?—Vile slave,
Do you dare indulge your ruffian humors here ?
What ! Chremes, too ?

Lyc. He struck me without cause.

Chre. Why, faith—I did so,

Fulv. I am weary of

Your causeless jarring, and must end them quickly.

For you, sir, here's a quittance for your services—

I have done with you— [Gives money—*Lycias crosses*, L.

Chre. Nay, Fulvius—'tis too much.

Fulv. It shall be as I say—Away!

Lyc. (*To Chremes.*) Remember,

You struck me without a cause.

Fulv. What does he mutter?

Chre. I care not.

Lyc. You may care ere long.

[*Exit*, L.

Fulv. (*c.*) This letter

Dispatch to Baix, to the Emperor.

[*Medon crosses and exit*, L

I have a herd of clients yet to see.

Chremes, attend me, we'll soon dismiss them,

And then I have a charge of grave import

For thee, ere I proceed unto the Capitol.

[*Exeunt*, L.

SCENE II.—*Near the Capitol, before a poor Inn.—Distant Music heard at intervals.*

Enter MUTIUS, from Inn, c.

Mutius. This way, sir—this way. I have now at last
Told you my mind; I pray you understand
The course that I would have you take.

GISIPPUS enters from the house, L. D. F., in a mean garb; his countenance pale and wasted, his hair hanging neglected on his shoulders, and his whole appearance completely changed. He leans against the doorway.

Gis. (*L. c.*) I pray you, do not send me forth to-night;
I am a stranger in Rome, and evening falls already,
I will but draw my toga o'er my head,
And lie against your fire.

Mutius. It must not be.

Gis. Are you so hard? Well, Roman, I'll not press it.
But pray you, say what festal sounds are these
That ring through the wide city? Whose is yon mansion?
It is a splendid one.

Mutius. Splendid, indeed!

What else should be the abode of Titus Fulvius?

Gis. (*Coming forward quickly.*) Of Titus Fulvius?

Mutius. Titus Fulvius. Are you

So long in Rome, and know not Titus Fulvius ?
 If you would feast your eyes with the sight of a great
 man,
 Stand close ; he will come this way presently ;
 You'll not mind fasting for three days after.

[*Exit into house, L.*]

Gis. Know Fulvius ?

I had known less of man, and more of peace,
 Had I ne'er known him. Oh, weak, failing pride !
 Do you desert me now I need ye most ?

"Will you, who have upborne my soul against

"The tyranny of passion, leave me now,

"To humble in my fall ?" Oh, for a spot

Of green, Greek turf ! a little—to hide

My woes, my memory, and my doubts together !

Where must I wander now ? The dews of eve

Fall on me, and I have no home of shelter

To shroud me till the morn-break.

I will seek one—

But—what do I behold ? The gate is opened,

And—hush ! my sense be steady for one moment—

That's Chremes—and—by all my miseries,

'Tis he himself ! Where shall I hide me ? Heavens !

[*Knocks at the door.*]

What ! ho—within ! They came upon me this way—

Well ? wherefore should I shun him ? Let him blush :

The shame's not mine—I grew to this for him.

Ha ! should I stay ? I'll try

If he will know me yet. But I'll not speak—

No, no, I'll merely look into his eyes,

And—

Enter FULVIUS and NORBAN, with Lictors, Citizens pressing on him. Gisippus stands on the opposite side of the stage, gazing intently on Fulvius, his cloak drawn close around his neck so as to conceal part of his features.

1st Cit. My lord—my noble lord—

2d Cit. My lord, I pray you, hear me.

Fulv. (L.) Good citizens, I cannot now attend.

If you will meet betimes at the capitol,

I will to-morrow hear your grievances ;

And if their remedy lie in my power,

Rest assured you shall not feel them long.

Citizens. To-morrow ! to-morrow !

Enter CHREMES, with scroll, L.

1st Cit. Then we will meet there, Fulvius.

Fulv. As you please.

It shall be as I say, believe me, friends.

Omnes. Long live the Prætor !

Citizens. Do you hear that ? “ Friends ! ” Long live our noble Prætor !

[*Shout.—Exeunt Citizens, R. and L.—Fulvius looks at Gisippus, who lowers his toga a little as he meets his eye.—Fulvius turns carelessly away.*]

Gis. (R.) The eye can be as vocal as the tongue,
And his hath told me I am known.

Fulv. (L.) You to your mistress go—bid her expect me
Yet earlier than she looked for. *Exit Norban, L. S. E.*

Chre. (L.) Fulvius,
I spoke with Varro on that matter now ;
He could do nothing.

Fulv. Nothing ! Did he give you
His reasons ?

Chre. They were of such a kind, he said,
As could be only trusted to yourself ;
This letter will disclose them.

Gis. Silent yet ?
I would I were beneath the deepest wave
Of dark Tyrrhene, to hope or doubt no more.
“ There is a fate that chains me to this ground,
“ A spell about my feet and on my strength,
“ And I must wait the sentence of his eye.”

[*Fulvius talks apart with Chremes.*]

Chre. Then as you bid me, Fulvius, I will act,
Though still, I fear, in vain.

Fulv. Have I not said ?
Away ! if you should fail, I will myself
Attempt him. Will you take a guard along ?
You pass the burying-ground of Afer, and
The night is falling.

Chre. Not I. I wear my guard upon me. [*Exit L.*]

[*Fulvius motions the Lictors forward. They approach Gisippus, who stands full in the way of Fulvius.*]

Fulv. On, lictors ! (*Reading a letter.*) Varro refuse
my first request !

1st Lic. Stand back !

Way for the Prætor !

Gis. I would speak with the Prætor.

1st Lic. Thou speak with him ?

A Greek dog bar the Prætor's way in Rome ?

Fulv. What words are these ? Who's he disputes our
way ?

Ho ! smite him to earth, if he will not

Give room.—Back, slave, and know your place !

On, lictors !

[*A Lictor strikes Gis. aside—they all pass off, R.*]

Gis. Bright Jove !

Art thou the stranger's keeper ? Let me press

My head—and crush the thought to rest for ever.

[*He presses his forehead with his hands and remains motionless.*]

Re-enter CHREMES, L.

Chre. One thing I had forgot. What ! gone already !
Ho ! Fulvius !

Gis. (*c.—starting.*) Curse him, heavens ! who'er thou
art,

Let dumbness seize thee ever for that word !

I had just then begun to tell my soul

'That it was false, that I had never heard

The name ; and I was dropping quietly

Into a dull, a thick, oblivious madness.

That busy, meddling tongue has waked my heart

To memory, sense and agony again.

[*Crosses, L.*]

Chre. (*R.*) What means this !

Gis. Oh ! I see and know thee now.

You are Chremes, the Athenian ? Worthy mates !

He is gone that way—Titus Fulvius,

Did you not call him ? You are fitted friends—

Two heartless, thankless, mean self-seekers—villains !

[*Crosses to R.*]

Chre. Madman !

"*Gis.* (*Clasping his hands.*) Oh ! would to heaven it
were so with me.

"*Chre.* Who art thou ? what—"

Gis. I am Gisippus.

Chre. Heavens !

Gis. You knew me well.

Chre. (*After a pause.*) Though you had been my brother, Gisippus,

The wondrous, fearful change that has come o'er thee,
Had been enough to baffle memory.

Even when instinctive nature helped its efforts.

"My friend ! my countryman !" Could you suppose me
That traitor to old Greece, and pleasant Athens,
To meet her exiled son, and the companion
Of my school-days, and pass him knowingly
In a strange land ? I pray you, be convinced
That you have wronged me. "I have sought you long,

"And now rejoice to find ye. By this hand,
"This hand that I am glad to grasp—I do."

Gis. I must believe you, sir—

"And yet, though I should grieve to think you scorned me,

"I should not wonder, In this dark, false world,

"Nothing shall ever now surprise me more."

Pray, come not near me, sir ; you are a soldier,

And wear the arms of honor. "I have, too,

"A sword, but long forgot the use of it."

I am an abject thing—a beaten wretch— [Crosses, L.

"Furies and hell ! Oh, peace ! peace ! Sleep and death !"

Chre. (R.) What is it moves you thus ?

Gis. (*Going, c.*) "Oh, cursed memory !"

You see me where I stand before you, Chremes—

It was not so when you have known me better.

You can remember what I was ; you know

How sweet, how fair a light of promise, fortune

Shed on my days of youth. You know how warmly

My confident soul opened itself to Fulvius ;

You know, too, somewhat more than at this time

My tongue can freely utter. Would you think

How all that has been answered ?

Chre. (R.) With a truer

And deeper gratitude than you believe.

Gis. This is that gratitude :—indeed, a deep one,

"Too deep for me to find its virtue." Hear !

When I left Athens.

Despised and hated by my fellow-citizens,

Yet naught repenting that which I had done,
I toiled for freedom, gained it, and set forth
To Rome. You start! Was that a meanness? No!
True, he had wronged me; and my pride was stung by it.
Alas! you know not, sir, how very quietly
And silently that same tall fabric, pride,
Is sapped and scattered by adversity,
Even while we deem it still unmoved, unshaken:
He was my friend once—and my life now, having
No aim nor object, I said within myself—
That I would look once more upon the happiness
I had raised from the wreck of mine own hopes,
And so to death or solitude. Look here, sir;
Here—here I met him; here he bade his slave
Strike me from out his path!—his own high hand
Scorned the low office—here his ruffian smote me!
And here I stand to tell it!

Chre. Yet—

Gis. No hasty judgment!

“Believe me I’m not sunk so low to bear that;

“But a strange numbness crept upon my senses,

“And left me cold and powerless.”

Chre. You

Are over-apt (and tis most natural in you,)
To fancy what you feared was real.—Trust me,
You are deceived to think that Fulvius knew you;
“His fortunes have, indeed, altered him strangely,
“But yet he is not what you deem him.

Gis. This

“Is kindly meant in you—I thank you for it;
“But I have eyes and ears, and a heart, Chremes,
“To see, and hear, and feel what passes round me,
“Even as it doth pass.” Fulvius knew me well!

[*Going, L.*

“I thank you, though, that you should seek to give me
“The bliss of thinking otherwise.”

Chre. Gisippus,
You do not go yet!

Gis. Wherefore should I stay?

Chre. Come with me to his palace.

Gis. To his palace?

What? Be indeed a beggar? The Tiber to my bed, first!

Chre. Hear me, Gisippus !

Gis. You are the only man that knows of this ;
How if you should betray me now, and publish
My shame unto the world ? “ You are like to do it.

“ I have known liars with as clear a brow

“ As that. And if you should by the just Gods,

“ I would not rest, sleep, wink, till I had torn.

“ Your heart out and destroyed”—but you’ll not do it.

You know me better. If you’d have me honor you,

You will not speak of this to your general.

Farewell ! I’ll meet ye soon again ! [*Going*, L.]

Chre. My friend !

Gis. No friend ! I charge ye, call me brother Greek,

But friend ! No, no, friendship and I have found

Each other out, shook hands, and parted quietly.

[*Exit Gisippus*, L.]

Chre. He’s gone ! poor Gisippus ! how worn, who
changed !

Here is a humbler for the pride of Fulvius !

But may not some device be yet invented

To reconcile the friends once more ? I’ll think on’t.

As I proceed, ’tis worth the plotting. [*Exit*, R.]

SCENE III.—*A Burying Ground. Night.*

GISIPPUS discovered seated on a tomb, L.

Gis. This is death’s court ;

Here does he hold his reign of stirless fear,

Silence his throne—his robe of majesty

The hue of gathering darkness. “ Here his minister,

“ The night-bird screams, and the hoarse raven iterates

“ His warning from the left.” Diseases flit

Like spectres through the gloom, clothed in damp mist

And tainted night-air—yet the grim slayer

Will send no kindly shaft to me.

[*Goes to R.*

Will the dead

Afford me what the living have denied—

Rest for my weary limbs, and shelter ? Here

At least I shall find quiet, if not ease,

And host who do not gaudge their entertaining,

Even though the guest be misery. Colder hearts

Than those which rest within this sepulchre,

I've left all in the health of lusty life,
 Informing bosoms harder than its marble.
 Then I will be your guest, ye silent dead,
 Would I could say, your fellow slumberer !

[He enters the tomb. Lycias comes from behind tomb looks off, R., then again conceals himself. Chremes wrapped in his mantle. passes over the stuge, dogged by Lucias. A clashing of swords is heard without L. U. E.]

Chre. *(Within.)* What ho ! help ! murder ! villain !

Lyc. *(Within.)* Do you feel me now ?

Chre. *(Within.)* Too deeply !

Lyc. *(Within.)* There's a quittance for ye.

[Gisippus re-enters from the tomb, draws and rushes off, Chremes staggers in, wounded, L. U. E. He falls near the tomb.]

Chre. Ah ! villian ! He has cut me to the veins,
 Revengeful villain ! Oh !

Re-ener Lycippus, L. U. E., his sword drawn.

Gis. The ruffian has escaped. What luckless wretch
 Has thus been made his victim ? You great Gods !
 Chremes !

Chre. Whoe'er thou art, I pray you give
 These scrolls to—to—

[Dies.]

Gis. This is thy justice, Death !
 I, who would greet thee with a lover's welcome,
 And kiss thy shaft, have wooed its point in vain ;
 This wretch, whose hope was green, thou seekest uncalled
 Relentless destinies ! Am I become
 Such an abomination in your sight,
 To love me is perdition ? Where—oh, where
 Is my offence ? But there may yet be hope.—
 Breathless and cold ! My last friend, fare ye well !

[Voices within, L. U. E. " This way ! this way !"
 They come. Is it not now within my reach ?
 I have it ! It shall be so !

[He stains his hands and sword with the blood of Chremes, and leans forward, kneeling over the body.]

1st Cit. *(Without, L. U. E.)* This way the sounds proceeded. Did you send
 To warn the Prætor's guard ?

2d *Cit.* Yonder they are.

Omens. (*Without.*) This way ! this way !

Enter CITIZENS, MEDON *and* GUARDS, *some with torches, from*
L. U. E.

Med. (L. c.) 'Tis as I feared. Chremes ! unhappy
countryman !

Who has done this ?

1st *Cit.* (L.) Do you not mark that man,
With bloody hands, who kneels beside the body ?
He is the murderer.

Med. Speak ! if thou art he.
Confess—it will be useless to deny it.
Confess—

Gis. Why, what confession do you need ?
I am here before you, in my hand a sword
Unsheathed, his blood upon that sword—yet warm
From the divided breast. What would ye more ?
Can words declare more ?

Med. Guards, away with him !

Omens. Away with him !

Med. Away with him to the Prætor ! Yet one word ;
What moved ye to this act ?

Gis. I had my reasons.

Med. Take him away.

Gis. Now I have made it sure.

Med. What dost thou say ?

Gis. I say that I rejoice
In that which I have done. Do as you list !

Med & Omens. Away with him ! [*Exeunt* L U E.]

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Palace of Fulvius.*

Enter FULVIUS *and* SOPHRONIA.

Fulv. (L. c.) Ay, I have heard enough. Why should
I tax
Your brother with this base and coward act,

That am myself more base in my neglect
Than he in his revenge. Poor Gisippus !
Banished from Athens, sold to slavery !
And now a wanderer without home or name !
Perhaps the tool of some low task-master,
Or the cold inmate of a nameless grave.

Soph. (R. c.) Yet, Fulvius—

Fulv. Ha ! how say you ?

Soph. Do not turn

Thus sullenly away, nor yet look on me
With that regard of cold reproach. I knew.
No more than thou of this unhappy chance,
And mourn it full as deeply.

Fulv. They were all
Your friends who did this.

Soph. And is that my crime ?

Fulv. I would give all again that I have gained—
My present joy—the memory of my past,
And all my hope of future happiness,
To stand beneath the roof that shelters him,
And know my gratitude not wholly fruitless.
Oh ! I am torn up with vain regrets !

[Crosses, R.

Soph. For my sake.

Speak not of this to Medon. What is past.
His ruin could not better. If you love me,
You will not—

Fulv. If I love ye ! Do you make
A doubt of that now—If I loved you not,
I had been now at peace with my own heart,
“ I had not brought a stain upon my soul
“ That no repentant sorrowing can whiten.”
Had I not loved thee better than fair virtue,
I might be now an honorable friend ;
“ And those quick rushing memories that crowd
“ Upon my heart in thick and painful throbbings,
“ Might shadow it with that calm, peaceful influence
“ Of Gratitude discharged, and friendship cherished,
“ Which makes remembrance sweeter than enjoyment.”
I've loved ye but too well !

Enter NORBAN and two Servants, L.

Nor. My lord—the murderer

Of Chremes bade me give these scrolls unto you :
The dying man had placed them in his hands.

Fulv. Have you spoke with him, then ?

Nor. By your command,

I went into his dungeon at the sunrise,
I found him waking then. His wasted form
Lengthened out in the dust—one shrivelled hand
Beneath his head, the other with lank fingers
Parting the matted hair upon his brow,
To take the greeting of the early light
Upon its sickly swarth—his eyes were fixed
On nothing visible ; a dead, dull light
Was in them, the cold lowering of despair,
His whitened lips were parted, and his teeth
Set fast, in fear or agony. I spoke—
My words dropped harmless on his ear. I sought
By kindness to attract his note, and placed
Before him food and wine—he pushed them from him,
Then looked into my face, shrunk back—and hid
His own within the foldings of his garment. [*Crosses, R.*

Fulv. (*Turning over the scrolls*) Ay, here is Varro's
answer. He had come

A few hours sooner, I had saved a friend by't.
And here—ha !

Nor. (R. c.) Madam, mark my lord !

Soph. What, Fulvius !

Fulv. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Joy ! triumph ! rapture ! He's in Rome—Away !
Fly ! seek him—all ! The man who finds him first

Soph. Whom ?

Fulv. (c) Gisippus !

My old friend is in Rome. Oh, ye kind Gods,
My heart is gushing towards ye !

Medon. (*Without, L.*) Fulvius !

What, Fulvius !

Enter MEDON, rapidly, L., a sword drawn and bloody in his hand.

He is innocent ?

Fulv. Who ?

Med. The Greck.

Fulv. How say ye? Are your waking sensesliars?
What weapon's that?

Med. The sword of the innocent man,
Whom even now they lead to execution.
It came thus stained in his defence of Chremes,
Not in his murder—Lycias, your freedman,
He has confessed the deed.

Fulv. (*Taking the sword as he crosses, L.*) Ha! Gods!

Med. Away!

Will you see a second murder? They are slaying him!
It is an hour since he was taken forth.

Fulv. (*Giving him a ring.*) Fly, Medon, with my warrant, and release him.

Haste! haste! [*Exit, Medon and the two Attendants, L.*]

'Tis strange! Some poor, life-weary wretch,
Who hoped unwisely in his youth—and droops
To find his dreams *but* dreams.

Nor. I fear, my lord,
They will be too late.

Fulv. I would not have it so
For more—[*Looks on the sword, examines it closely, and rapidly recognizes it, and remains fixed in horror.*]

Soph. My lord! You terrify me, Fulvius!
Speak—Speak!

Enter MACRO, L

Macro. The murderer of Chremes—

Fulv. (*Turning and raising his sword.*) Liar!
Ho! smite him dumb, some one! My hand is powerless.
My limbs are cold add numb!

Soph. My lord! my love!

Macro. His last request.

Fulv. 'Tis in thine eye and lip!
Thou comest to tell me I'm a murderer,
The murderer of my friend—and if thou dost,
The word shall choke thy life. (*Seizes him.*) Croak out thy
news!

Raven! if they must tell of death—or peace!
Give't not in words.—Look me a hope! He lives?
He does! he does! You've looked me into strength again!
Gisippus! Gisippus! Gisippus!

[*Rushes out, L.—Sophronia, &c., follow.*]

SCENE II.—*The Place of Execution.*

GISIPPUS *standing in chains*.—DECIVS, GUARDS, &c.

Dec. (R.) Remove his chains. [*Lictor takes off chains.*]

Gis. (C.) Let it be ever thus—

The generous still be poor—the niggard thrive—
 Fortune shall pave the ingrate's path with gold,
 Death dog the innocent still—and surely those
 Who now uplift their streaming eyes, and murmur
 Against oppressive fate, will own its justice.
 Invisible ruler! should man meet thy trials
 With silent and lethargic sufferance,
 Or lift his hands and ask heaven for a reason?
 Our hearts must speak—the sting, the whip is on them;
 We rush in madness forth to tear away
 The veil that blinds us to the cause. In vain!
 The hand of that Eternal Providence
 Still holds it there, unmoved, impenetrable!
 We can but pause, and turn away again
 To mourn—to wonder—and endure.

Dec. (*Advances, R.*) My duty
 Compels me to disturb ye, prisoner.

Gis. I am glad you do so, for my thoughts were grow-
 ing

Somewhat unfriendly to me.—World, farewell;
 And thou whose image never left this heart,
 Sweet vision of my memory, fare thee well!
 Pray you, walk this way. *Comes down, C.—To Decius.*
 This Fulvius, your young Prætor, by whose sentence
 My life stands forfeit, has the reputation
 Of a good man amongst ye?

Dec. Better breathes not.

Gis. A just man, and a grateful. One who thinks
 Upon his friends, sometimes; a liberal man,
 "Whose wealth is not for his own use;" a kind man,
 To his elients and his household?

Dec. He is all this.

Gis. A gallant soldier, too?

Dec. I've witnessed that

In many a desperate fight.

Gis. In short, there lives not

A man of fairer fame in Rome ?

Dec. Nor out of it.

Gis. Good. Look on *me*, now, look upon my face :
I am a villain, am I not ?—nay, speak !

Dec. You are found a murderer.

Gis. A coward murderer :

A secret, sudden stabber. 'Tis not possible
That you can find a blacker, fouler character,
Than this of mine ?

Dec. The Gods must judge your guilt ;
But it is such as man should shudder at.

Gis. This is a wise world, too, friend, is it not ?
Men have eyes, ears, and (sometimes) judgment.
Have they not ?

Dec. They are not all fools.

Gis. Ha ! ha ! [*Turns up, i., but stops short.*

Dec. You laugh !

Gis. (*Walks on to scaffold.*) A thought
Not worth your notice, sir. You have those scrolls
I bade you give the Prætor ? Was't not you ?

Dec. I think they are now within the Prætor's hands
His page it was to whom ye gave them.

Gis. Ha !

Lead me on quickly, then. Did I not say
He should not see them till my death was past ?
Not while a quivering pulse beat in my frame,
That could awake one hope of restoration ?
What ! shall he say I quailed and sought his merey ?
A wavering suicide ?—and drag me back
To life and shame ? Fool ! Idiot ! But haste on,
I will not be prevented. [*Going to platform.*

Fulvius. (*Within, r.*) Give way !
Way ! way !—hold ! hold !

Gis. Shall I be cheated ? [*Goes on platform.*
Your duty, officers ?

Dec. Peace ! 'tis the Prætor.

Gis. Let me not be disturbed in my last moments—
The law of Rome is merciful in that.

[*Fulvius rushes in, r., and remains on one side of the stage, greatly agitated, his toga elevated in one hand so as to shut out all the other characters from his view.*

Fulv. (c.) I dare not look ! All silent ! This is terrible !

I dare not ask ! The hue of death is round me.
In mercy, speak ! Is't over ? Am I late ?

Gis. (*Advancing, c.*) I would ye were.

Fulv. (*Clasping his hands.*) I thank ye, Gods, my soul
Is bloodless yet ! I am no murderer !
Friend ! Gisippus !

Gis. Oh, no, you are in error, sir

Fulv. By all the Gods— [*Approaching him.*

Gis. Hold back ! or I will spurn ye !
By all the Gods, proud Roman, it is false !
I'll not be mocked again.

Fulv. Is this a mockery ?

Look, Romans, on this man—Oh, Gisippus ?
Look on him—Oh, that pale, that wasted face ! [*Kneels.*
To him I owe all that you know me master of !
Life, public honor, and domestic happiness !
Here in this thronged area Fulvius kneels
Before his benefactor—in that attitude
Prouder than when he took his place among
The judges of your capitol.

Gis. A Prætor

Kneels at my feet !—Look ! look upon him, Romans !
“Hear this, ye purpled ones, and hide your heads !”
Behold, how mean the gilded ingrate shows
Beside the honest poverty he scorned—
Start from the earth, man, and be more yourself,
Arch the sharp brow, curl the hard lip, and look
The heartless thing ye are ! Court not opinion,
By this mean mockery.

Dec. (*Advancing to Fulv.*) Rise, my lord !

[*Fulvius rises dejectedly, and motions with his hand—all
but Gis. and Ful, turn their backs to audience, up
Stage.*

Fulv. (*R. c.*) Gisippus,

Are you content yet ? I have knelt to you ;
Not in the meanness of a crouching spirit,
But dragged down by the deadening self-reproach
That wintered it within my soul. But now
I've borne an insult in the sight of Rome,
Which is unto the honorable mind,
What death is to the coward. Now I stand
Erect, and challenge ye to name the sin
Which this endurance may not satisfy.

Gis. (*Pausing in surprise.*) You speak this well—sir—
faith, 'tis very well,
Certain, I am wrong. You have done naught you have
done ;

Nor is this air I breathe—air—nor this soil
Firm earth on which we stand. Nor is my heart
A throbbing fire within me now—no—no,
Nor this hot head an *Ætna*—Ha ! Farewell !
Nothing of this is so. I am very wrong. [*Going out, R.*

Fulv. Yet hold—

Gis. (*Bursting into fury.*) What, haughty ingrate !
Feel I not

The fascies of your satellites yet on me ?
Hold back ! cross—touch me, stay me, speak again,
And by the eternal light that saw my shame,
I'll gripe that lying throat until I choke
The blackening perjury within ! Oh, sin !
Oh, shame ! oh, world ! I'm now a weak, poor wretch—
Smote down to very manhood. “Judgment lost,
“I've flung the reins loose to my human spirit,
“And that's a wild one ! Rouse it, and ye pluck
“The beard of the lion. *Gisippus*, that was
“The lord of his most fiery impulses,
“Is now a child to trial.” High philosophy,
With its fine influences, has fled his nature ;
And all the mastery of mind is lost.

Fulv. Yet, would you hear—

Gis. Could I chain up my heart,
That bounds unbridled now—and force my sense
To drink your words, it were in vain.
My heart has grown incapable of all gentleness,
And hard to every natural affection :
Ye may as well go talk the warm, red blood
Out of that column. Begone—ye vex me !

“ [*Going out, R.*

Fulv. You shall not go ! Curse me,—but speak not
“thus !

“Will nothing

“Move ye to hear me ?

Gis. “Nothing. Could you conjure
“The memory of my wrongs away, and leave me
“No other cause for being what I am,

"Than that I am so, nothing yet could change me.

"Psha!" Death! Why do I dally thus?—Away!

See me no more!

Away! Farewell! No more? [*Turning and bursting away, he looks off the Stage, R., starts, and remains motionless.*

Fulv. Ha! Sophronia comes! It stirs him.

Gis. My dreams have been of this! My sleep has been Fear haunted, till this vision came to quiet it, And then my soul knew peace! Oh, ye have been My memory's nightly visitant.

Fulv. (*Elevating his hand to Sophronia within.*)

"Hush! softly!"

"*Gis*" Beautiful phantom of my faded hope!
How many thousand, thousand scenes of joy,
Not rudely dragged from rest,
But quietly awakened into light
By the soft magic of that *wizard* glance.
Rise on my soul, as from the dead!

Fulv. (R.) Sophronia!

Enter SOPHRONIA, R.

Soph. I am here to seek ye. They have told me, Fulvius—

Ha! Gisippus!

[*Reaching him her hand.*

Gis. Hush! peace, sweet woman! All

Is softening o'er my wounded heart again.

Sophronia, I am glad you do not scorn me;

There is a reconciling influence

About ye, in your eyes, air, speech, a stilling spell,

The wronged heart cannot strive against.

Fulv. Gisippus,

Would you prove that?

Gis. (*With his eyes still fixed on Sophronia.*) 'Tis not impossible, Fulvius.

Soph. (*Drawing him to Fulvius.*) Then for my sake, Gisippus—hear Fulvius.

Gis. All for thee!*

Fulv. Not for pardon, but for truth
And justice's sake, I urge thy hearing now:

* According to the original text, the piece terminates here; but as the play is usually acted in this country, the lines following are introduced.

For innocence investigating seeks,
 As broad and searching as the winds of Heaven ;
 While conscious guilt its safety finds in dark
 Concealment and in flight.—Now hear and judge :
 Commanded by the Emperor to join
 The army instantly, I quitted you
 And Athens !—Chremes (hapless youth !) a scroll
 Did bear, informing you of this intent,
 And praying you to follow straight, and share
 My fortune and my love.

Gis. That scroll—that scroll !
 I well remember now I did receive,
 But ne'er perused ; for, blind with rage and grief,
 And wounded pride, I tore—Oh, fatal haste !
 Thy friendship's proof, and scattered to the winds
 The love I sought.

Fulv. To others oft I wrote,
 But ne'er received reply ; unknowing, then,
 Your hapless fate, I deemed you had forgot
 Your friend, and ceased to write you more.

Gis. Alas !

Fulv. My country's wars on foreign shores have claimed
 My sword and presence ever since ! But now
 Returned,—within this very hour, the dreadful tale
 So long concealed from me—

Soph. Was told !—and now—Gisippus—

Gis. Sophronia !—

Soph. You hear ?—and you forgive ?—

Gis. All ! all ! for thee !

*[Gisippus joins the hands of Fulvius and Sophronia,
 who kneel—Gisippus raises his hands above their heads
 as in the act of blessing them, and the Curtain falls
 to slow music of Hymn as played in first and second
 Acts.]*

DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF THE
 CURTAIN.

GISIPPUS.

SOPHRONIA.

FULVIUS.

R.]

[L

THE END.



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